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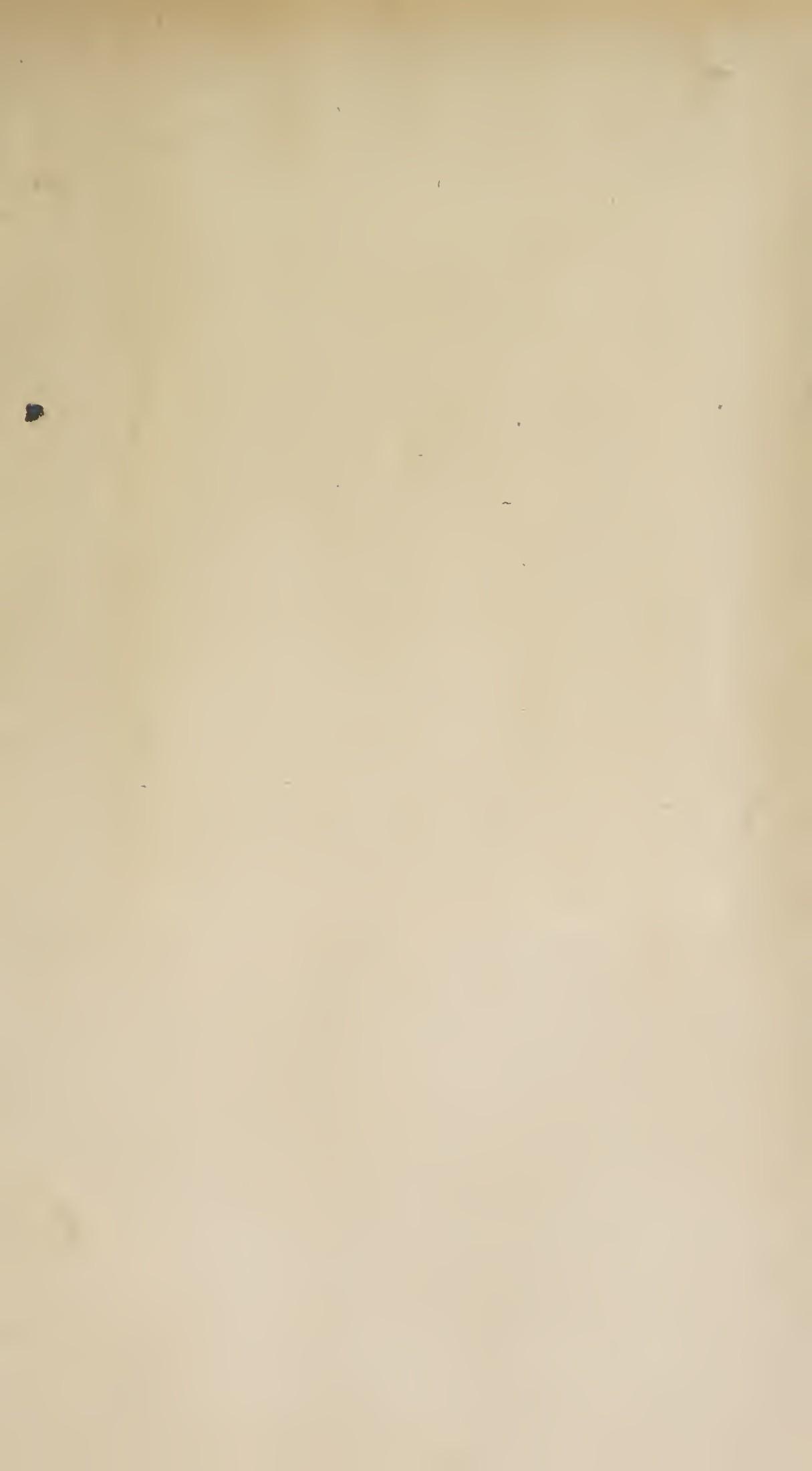




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"Tell me some more, I like it."

ON CHANGE.

*Yvette Guilbert  
Jacques Offenbach*

# THE THEATRE.

A Monthly Review

OF

THE DRAMA, MUSIC, AND THE FINE ARTS.

EDITED BY

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MISS HELEN FORSYTH in "Sophia."	MR. AUGUSTUS HARRIS in "Human Nature."

#### ENGRAVINGS

JAMES QUIN.	JOHN HENDERSON.
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# THE THEATRE.

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## Bouffé's Early Days.

BY CHARLES HERVEY.

It may, I think, be taken for granted that a man has but a poor chance of succeeding in a profession, unless he be endowed with a special vocation and aptitude for it. The square peg in the round hole can hardly be called a satisfactory adjustment, and, although it frequently happens that those especially fitted for a particular career are compelled by circumstances to embrace another, and even in time become tolerably reconciled to the substitution, the old bias nevertheless remains, and they feel that they could have done far better had they been enabled to carry out their original intention. No permanent difficulty of this kind stood in the way of Bouffé; if ever anyone were destined for the stage both by predilection and natural gifts, it was assuredly the creator of “*Michel Perrin*” and the “*Gamin de Paris*,” as a perusal of his interesting “*Recollections*,” published a few years ago, to which I am mainly indebted for the idea of the present paper, will clearly show.

When barely thirteen he began life as apprentice to his father, a carver and gilder at that period (1813), at the head of a large establishment, and soon mastered the rudiments of his profession, although, as he incidentally remarks, his own inclinations, had they been consulted, would have prompted him to become a scene painter. It is not surprising that this project of being in some way connected with a theatre should have had a peculiar fascination for him, for both his parents were constant playgoers, and every sou he himself could economise out of his scanty allowance was exclusively devoted to the purchase of a gallery ticket, or—when his funds were too low to admit of such extravagance—

*contremarque*, sold to him at half price by some accommodating boulevard loafer. Before he was ten years old, he tells us, he had already witnessed the performance of "twenty melodramas, thirty vaudevilles, a considerable number of comic operas, and a few tragedies;" moreover, one of his aunts presided over the stage wardrobe of the Ambigu, thereby furnishing him with an excuse for penetrating behind the scenes of that theatre, taking especial care to keep out of the way of the *régisseur*, of whose forbidding exterior he stood in perpetual awe. His chief delight was to waylay the performers as they entered or left their dressing rooms, and to indulge in an admiring stare at their costumes; more than one of them greeted the youthful enthusiast with a friendly nod, and Klein, then a member of the company, once gratified him beyond measure by saying, "Here is our young amateur again. If that lad isn't an actor one of these days, it will not be his fault." Little did the speaker imagine that, before many years had elapsed, he and the "lad" would be firm friends and comrades at the Gymnase, and that he himself would deem it an honour to play Menu to the other's Grandet in "*La Fille de l'Avare*."

There existed at that epoch in Paris a considerable number of private theatres of more or less repute, four only really meriting the name. These were the Théâtre Mareux in the Rue St. Antoine, the Théâtre Doyen in the Rue Transnonain, and two others respectively situated in the Rue Chantereine and the Rue de Paradis in the Marirs. In 1820, some of his father's workmen having agreed to essay their histrionic powers at the Théâtre Doyen, Bouffé consented to join them, and his first regular appearance on the boards\* took place there as Alain in "*L'Ecole des Femmes*" and Sganarelle in "*Le Médecin malgré lui*." His eldest sister, afterwards the wife of Gauthier, of the Cirque, was also among the performers, and attracted so much notice by her beauty and sympathetic talent that the manager of the Ambigu, who was present on the occasion, immediately offered her an engagement, which she finally accepted; and this piece of good fortune decided her brother to follow his natural instincts, and devote himself henceforward to a profession which above all others possessed for him an irresistible charm.

\* He had previously acted in a "partie" got up by amateurs of his acquaintance at a little theatre in the Rue St. Antoine belonging to an upholsterer named Cassa and had been vociferously applauded in "*Le Savetier et le Financier*."

Two new theatres were then on the point of opening, the Gymnase and the Panorama Dramatique; and it would, he thought, be indeed unlucky if he failed in obtaining admission to either. No time, however, was to be lost; so, summing up all the courage he could muster, which was little enough, for no one was more constitutionally timid throughout his entire career than Bouffé, and without confiding his intention to anyone except to his sister, on whose discretion he could safely rely, he started on his expedition to the Rue St. Pierre Montmartre, where the autocrat of the Gymnase resided. On arriving at his destination, he was informed that "Monsieur le Directeur" occupied an apartment on the fourth floor, and, scrambling up a dilapidated staircase, discovered a card nailed on a door facing him, and inscribed "Delestre Poirson." A gentle ring at the bell eliciting no reply, he was about to retrace his steps, rather relieved than otherwise, when the door suddenly opened, and an individual in spectacles appeared on the threshold, who, motioning him to enter a small and poorly-furnished room, asked him abruptly what his business was.

Discouraged by this not over-promising reception, he stammered out a few disjointed phrases of apology for the intrusion, when he was interrupted by an imperative request to come to the point at once, and state as briefly as possible what he wanted.

More confused than ever, the trembling aspirant explained that his motive in coming was to solicit an engagement at the Gymnase.

"To what theatre do you belong?" asked M. Poirson.

"To none," replied Bouffé. "As yet, I have only acted with amateurs."

"Oh! indeed," was the manager's curt rejoinder. "Do you suppose, young sir, that a novice like yourself would be of the slightest use in a theatre where such artists as Gonthier, Perlet, and Mdlle. Déjazet are already engaged. The Gymnase is not a school for beginners, and you might have spared me the trouble of listening to you. Good morning."

Utterly disheartened by his failure, the mortified applicant sadly withdrew. "There is no help for it," he said to himself; "I must try M. Allaux."

The temporary abode of the Director of the Panorama Dramatique was in the Rue des Fossés du Temple, and, with even more

misgiving than before, Bouffé inquired of the slatternly maid-servant who answered the bell if he were visible. After a brief parley he was admitted into the sanctum, where he found M. Allaix, who on the preceding day had sprained his ankle while inspecting the interior of his newly-constructed theatre, reclining on a sofa, the injured limb swathed in bandages, and a crutch placed conveniently within his reach.

"Who are you?" asked the invalid in a querulous tone; "and what is your business here?"

The necessary explanation having been given, "Humph!" said, or rather growled, the manager; "what parts do you propose taking?"

"Anything in the low comedy line."

"The low comedy line," repeated M. Allaix. "Very good; then place yourself there under No. 7," pointing with his crutch as he spoke to a plan in the shape of a coffin attached to the wall, and divided into compartments slanting progressively downwards and numbered from 1 to 7, the highest being marked "premiers rôles" and the lowest "bas comiques."

Bouffé did as he was told, thinking that this original would probably next put him in the scale to ascertain his weight. As, however, he was then barely five feet in height, and never grew an inch afterwards, he failed to reach the standard required, as the manager had evidently expected.

"I was sure of it," triumphantly exclaimed the latter; "half an inch at least too short. My good sir, you won't do for us."

"But, monsieur," modestly suggested his visitor, "permit me to observe that for the parts in question half an inch more or less can hardly be considered an insuperable objection."

"Once for all," shouted M. Allaix, "I repeat you are too short, and that settles the matter."

Uncertain whether to stay or go, poor Bouffé stood for a moment irresolute; then, judging the case to be hopeless, was gradually edging towards the door when it suddenly opened, and a stout person of jovial aspect entered the room.

"Just the man I want," said the director. "Look at that young fellow, Solomé, and tell me if he isn't too short for our theatre."

"That depends," replied the new comer, who was no other than the stage manager, "on what line he takes."

"Low comedy."

"Ah! Let us see first what he can do. You can recite something, I suppose," he added, turning to Bouffé.

"Certainly."

After listening attentively to a scene from "Les Folies Amoureuses," M. Solomé gave a nod of approval. "My dear Allaux," he said, "you can't do better than engage the young man for small parts; he is intelligent, and I am confident we can make something of him."

"Possibly," grumbled the manager; "but I maintain my opinion—he is too short."

However, yielding reluctantly to the persuasion of his factotum, he finally consented, and the interview closed by the engagement of Bouffé at a salary of three hundred francs a year, or, in other words, a pound a month; precisely, he thought, the wages of a *bonne*, if he were lucky enough to have one. But he was now an "artist," and that sufficed for his ambition; the important question how he was to exist on so miserable a stipend being magnanimously dismissed from his mind as a secondary consideration.

His *début* at the Panorama Dramatique took place April 14, 1821, in a melodrama called "Ismael et Maryam," the part assigned him being the reverse of comic, and consisting only of three lines. Soon after M. Allaux sold his interest in the theatre to M. Langlois, who inaugurated his managerial career by raising Bouffé's salary to twelve hundred francs, but was ultimately compelled to resign his directorship to a M. Chedel, who in his turn failed to make it a paying concern, and was declared bankrupt in 1823. During his tenure of office "La Petite Lampe Merveilleuse" drew good houses, mainly owing to the excellent acting of Bertin as Aladdin, and of our hero as the Sultan Ababa-Patapouf. The scene of this piece being laid in China, a bald head simulating that of the natives of the Celestial Empire was necessarily indispensable, and afforded Bouffé an opportunity of displaying the conscientious exactness which invariably characterised him.

While dressing for his part, the "capillary artist" attached to the theatre brought him a skull-cap, made of paste-board, as the nearest approach to a Chinese *coiffure* that his ingenuity could invent, which the actor, after trying it on, rejected with disdain.

"Shave my head," he said coolly, and, despite the remonstrances

of the tonsor, insisted so authoritatively that ten minutes later the surface of his cranium was as smooth as a billiard ball.

“That will do,” said Bouffé, surveying himself with satisfaction in the glass; “I have at all events ‘le physique de l’emploi.’”

He had, however, forgotten that off the stage a bald head is scarcely a desirable appendage to a youth of twenty-two, and had some natural misgivings how the damsel he was then courting, and whom he subsequently married, would relish his appearance in a wig. Fortunately the young lady, contrary to his expectations, enjoyed the joke amazingly, and even went so far as to pronounce the alteration extremely becoming, a fact which her lover, like Hudusi in the “Pacha of many Tales,” felt very much inclined to doubt.

M. Chedel’s failure having put an end to Bouffé’s engagement, he agreed with Minette Franconi, manager of the Cirque Olympique, to personate two different characters, a young peasant and an old *invalid*, in a grand military spectacle got up with great splendour in celebration of the victory of Trocadero. The first of these necessitated the use of stilts, an accomplishment in which, after much practice in the riding school, he became a tolerable proficient; while in the second he had to sing at least half-a-dozen couplets, wherein, as a matter of course, “*gloire*” was the inevitable rhyme to “*victoire*,” and “*lauriers*” to “*guerriers*.<sup>1</sup>” His success far exceeded his expectations, and, when the run of the piece was over, Minette called him into his private room, and, with the air of a man who was about to do a liberal thing, handed him two hundred francs as a recompense for his services. Bouffé, who had counted on five hundred, was considerably taken aback by the modicity of the sum, and quietly intimated as much; whereupon the manager graciously condescended to add a further largesse of fifty francs, closing the interview by an elaborate eulogium of his own unexampled generosity.

“This,” remarks the author of the “*Recollections*,” “is one proof out of many that, although in the course of my long career I may have been, as some have kindly said, the spoiled child of the public, I have certainly never been that of Mdme. Fortune!”

It would be taxing the patience of the reader too far were I to prolong a paper purporting to treat only of Bouffé’s early days. It is enough to say that in 1824 he appeared at the Gaîté, in 1827 at the Nouveautés, and in 1830 signed an engagement at the

Gymnase with the identical M. Delestre Poirson who had treated him so cavalierly a few years before. His subsequent triumphs,\* and his final retirement from the stage in 1878, are they not sufficiently recorded in the dramatic history of the time, and in the memories of all who have enjoyed the privilege of witnessing them?



## The Rose-Queen.

AN ALLEGORY.

**T**HE fairest rose of a rich rose-bed  
Its fragrance over the others shed ;  
No flower could rival its form or scent ;  
The proud white lily was e'en content  
To bow its beauty before this rose,  
Red like the sun when it seeks repose ;  
And bees and butterflies wooed its heart ;  
But still it stood, like a queen, apart.

A nightingale from a tree above  
Would watch this rose with its eyes of love,  
And, poet-like, through the whole night long,  
Would pour its heart in a flood of song.  
But, proud, the rose would make no reply  
To bee, or song-bird, or butterfly ;  
While all the flowers around it yearned  
For even half of the love it spurned.

A skylark came to this garden fair,  
And singing sailed o'er the roses there.  
The whole air rang with its rapturous notes,  
Echoed by hundreds of feathered throats.  
Heedless it swooped to the flowered ground,  
Then up once more with a wingéd bound ;  
And as it soared to the far-off blue,  
The rose-queen's heart went heavenwards too.  
The rose was plucked for a maid's love-token ;  
Now flung away,—and the maid's heart-broken.  
The nightingale that would love the rose  
Sang out its life ere the summer's close.  
The lark, so glad of its own free life,  
Was shot, and fell to the gourmand's knife.  
So all things pass ; yet the world is fair.  
Is death worth sorrow ? Is life worth care ?

MALCOLM CHARLES SALAMAN.

---

\* The parts played by this eminent comedian at various theatres from 1821 to 1857 amount in number to exactly one hundred and fifty-five, of which only seven had been previously performed by other actors.

## An Englishman on the Spanish Stage.

By WALTER GOODMAN.

THE typical Englishman of light comedy and farce is as popular in the Peninsula as elsewhere on the Continent, and his idiosyncracies are there no less developed and exaggerated. Perhaps John Bull never appeared on the foreign stage to better—and worse—advantage than in a little farcical comedy in one act, originally written by its author for Señor Romea, a light comedian of great repute in Spain, and produced for the first time, at the Teatro Principal of Valencia, on the 20th of April, 1860. It was, however, not till the 19th of May, 1868, that the writer of these pages was present at a revival of the play, and on that occasion the leading rôle was undertaken by one of Her Majesty's British subjects.

The title of the piece—which was termed a comedy and was in metrical verse—is derived from a proverbial expression difficult to render into corresponding Anglo-Saxon, so we will call it “The eleventh hour,” which is its nearest equivalent, and sufficiently expresses its motive. The “Personajes,” or characters, were :—

CONCHA,

JULIAN,

LORENZO,

and MR. HENRY.

The last-named personage is, as the name suggests, an Englishman, supposed to have resided some years in Madrid, where the scene is laid, and for this reason he possesses only a slight foreign accent. The stage directions inform the actor of this part that he must “allow for the guttural accent peculiar to the English language,” but the author naturally addressed the remarks to his own countrymen, and probably did not imagine that the character would one day be impersonated by a *bonâ fide* Briton.

In addition to the guttural accent, Mr. Henry is “supposed to possess” many of the peculiarities of his compatriots, and some

of these are represented by certain eccentricities and foibles which, in the opinion of all well-thinking Spaniards, are characteristic of the English nation. According to our foreign *confrères* there is a general disposition on the part of the British subject travelling on the Continent to disturb his neighbours, and a similar tendency to intrude in places where he is not wanted, as is practically demonstrated by his occupation of the rock of Gibraltar, and one or two trifling possessions in the East and West Indies. In elucidation of this popular theory, Mr. Henry is made to follow to her domestic dwelling, a respectable married lady, whom he has casually met at the opera one night, when Grisi and Mario were performing there, and without inquiring who the gentleman may be that accompanies the lady to her habitation, he presents himself at her door—which, like all well-regulated doors of the drama, is conveniently ajar—and, after introducing his person, proceeds to introduce the subject which has brought him there at the unfashionable hour of 11 p.m. This he does in choice Castilian couplets, beginning,

A los piés de usted, señora,

a form of salutation which literally interpreted reads, “at your feet, madam,” being the elegant equivalent of the “Comment vous portez-vous” of Gaul, and the “Wie befinden sie sich” of Germany.

“I daresay you will be surprised,” he continues, “at this visit.”

“To tell you the truth,” answers the lady, “I certainly am.”

“Quite so,” he observes. “I have not yet explained.”

At this point the lady’s husband interposes by politely suggesting that their uninvited guest should be seated. But the Englishman prefers to speak his speech standing, and in this position he proceeds to descant upon the virtues of his countrymen, and to call attention to his face, his dress, and his accent, all of which show that he himself belongs to the nation just extolled. He follows this up by expressing his adoration of the fair sex generally, and refers more particularly to a certain “Oriental pearl” whom he has admired from a distance at the opera, as she sat resplendent in a “Palco platea,” or private box, at the Teatro Real; and after mentioning how he has sworn not to sleep that night till he has ascertained whether the object of his admiration will correspond with his affections, he comes to the point by declaring that his Dulcinea is the lady before him, and abruptly asks her hand.

At this sudden disclosure and demand, Concha very naturally

is struck dumb with astonishment, while her lord—who, during the Englishman's recital, has delivered himself of certain asides to no one in particular, unless the audience or the prompter—is horrified and, to say the least of it, annoyed. With the *sang-froid* peculiar to his countrymen, Mr. Henry regards their looks with indifference, and when the outraged husband attempts to speak, he requests him not to meddle with matters that don't concern him.

"Don't concern me!" exclaims the exasperated gentleman; "why that lady is——"

"A funeral," observes the Englishman in Spanish metaphor, "where there is no grave for *you*;" and having delivered himself of this grim sentiment he takes his departure, after coolly informing Concha that he will return in fifteen minutes for her reply. This is, of course, in perfect harmony with the business-like habits of a nation of shopkeepers; but, not forgetful of Castilian customs, our representative figuratively "kisses the lady's hand" while taking his leave.

When he is fairly gone, the high-minded Madrileño—who has hitherto endeavoured to control his feelings, partly from native politeness, partly from natural pusillanimity, founded on an Englishman's reputed skill in the art of self-defence—now gives full voice to his pent-up feelings for the benefit of his better-half.

"As a specimen of the eccentric sons of the cotton-spinning community," says he, "this fellow beats any that I have ever met. Does this Nero of the nineteenth century imagine that connubial felicity is fabricated by machinery, like cotton night-caps? What do you say, my dear?"

CONCHA. I am simply bewildered.

JULIAN. Well, if he dares to come here again, I'll slam the door in his face. I'll cure his fancies for him; I'll show him——

CONCHA. Show him what, my love?

JULIAN. Why, that if he can order people about in his own house, I can do the same in mine. But who would think of obeying people who—well, who eat eggs with tea, butter with potatoes, dress in deepest mourning, and whose very idiom is idiotic?

Here the exasperated gentleman gives an example of the inconsistency of the English language by referring to the word "pretty," which, as accentuated by a Spaniard, sounds like a

word in his own tongue, signifying hideous, as well as atrocious.

Pues por llamarte bonito,  
Te dicen "pruty," esto es bruto.

Which, for the comprehension of the reader, might be rendered : “When they want to call you pretty, they say ‘beautiful’ ; that is, *brutal* !”

“In short,” adds the Spaniard, “I’ll have no more dealings with people who eat raw meat.”

Concha here endeavours to pacify her spouse, and account for the Englishman’s strange behaviour by reminding Julian that Mr. Henry is not yet aware that the object of his attachment is a married woman. This affords some consolation to her husband, but still he cannot get over the snubbing he received and the unceremonious conduct generally of their guest.

“Perhaps the fellow took you to be my daughter,” he remarks. “Gracious powers ! Is it possible that I have the face of my wife’s father ?”

Señor, si tendré yo cara  
De padre de mi mujer ?

Julian continues to relieve his mind in this way till he is reminded of the lateness of the hour, and he is about to lock the door for the night when it is thrown wide open and a familiar voice is heard to say :

“At your feet, madam.”

“Here he is again !” exclaims the husband, with suppressed rage.

“Mil perdones”—a thousand pardons—coolly remarks the Englishman, quite unmindful of what has been said ; and, taking out his watch, he adds, “I have returned punctually, you see.” (He sido exacto en volver.)

JULIAN (*aside*). Would that he had returned to the Antipodes !

MR. HENRY. If those bright eyes will but illumine—

JULIAN. Look here, sir ! Am I nobody that I’m not worth so much as a salutation ?

MR. H. (*calmly regarding him with his eye-glass*). I really don’t know what our friend here has to do with this business. (*Another aside from “our friend here” depreciatory of Great Britain.*)

CONCHA. That gentleman is my husband.

MR. H. Your husband ? (*glances at him with an air of profound*

*contempt.)* Well, madam, to speak candidly, you deserve something better.

JULIAN (*aside*). Nothing seems to satisfy him. (*Aloud.*) My dear, tell him clearly and distinctly who I am.

Further explanation is, however, unnecessary, as the midnight intruder informs the lady that a husband is an impediment easily overcome by an Englishman. "You seem to forget, madam," says he, "that Great Britain is able to accomplish almost anything. Consider her commerce, her trade, her manufactures. Look at her naval resources, and remember what she has achieved in the way of steam, electricity, and engineering. Think of her telegraphs, her tunnels, and her 81-ton guns!"

JULIAN (*sententiously*). And, above all, her rock of Gibraltar!

MR. H. For those, therefore, who have known how to control the four elements, a husband is an obstacle easily got over.

CONCHA. I don't quite understand.

MR. H. I will soon explain, if you will but reward me with your love.

CONCHA. I don't follow you.

MR. H. Nothing is easier. I'll fight with your husband; kill him, and marry his widow.

CONCHA. Horrible idea!

MR. H. You can go into mourning, you know.

JULIAN. One moment, sir; one moment! Either you are an Englishman who has taken leave of his senses, or I am a Spaniard who never had any. Let us put an end to this inquiry, and never refer to the subject again. And let us also put an end to this interview, as in sunny Spain people are not in the habit of receiving visits at midnight. If in foggy Albion night is turned into day, the sons of our meridian retire before cock-crow. So take the hint, sir, and——your leave. (*Offers his arm to CONCHA.*)

CONCHA. I'm all of a tremble!

JULIAN (*aside to her*). We'll tell Lorenzo to turn him out, and at the same time turn out the gas. (*Exeunt MR. and MRS. J.*)

Lorenzo is the man-servant, and while the Englishman is comfortably seated alone, moralising in metre upon Spaniards, their early habits and uncivilised customs, that trusty domestic enters, and after a brief aside in which he compares the situation to a scene in a bull ring and the Englishman to a veritable toro about to be attacked by a matador, he presents Mr. Henry's hat as a hint for

the owner of it to go. Finding the owner will take neither the thin nor the hat, he tries to make his meaning more clear by employing the Anglo-Saxon expression "Good bye," which the stage directions inform the actor should be articulated as if written "Gudbai." But Lorenzo's attempts at the English language, although they succeed in rousing the British lion, fail to have the desired effect, as he still obstinately refuses to stir till he has conferred in private with the object of his affections. Meanwhile he orders the domestic to leave the apartment, and takes occasion also to order a cup of tea.

This in turn awakens the wrath of Lorenzo, who is a sturdy Aragonese, not to be dictated to by a son of perfidious Albion, and presently he asks, "Are you from Gibraltar?"

MR. H. Yes; what of it?

LOREN. I thought as much!

MR. H. Why?

LOREN. From your habit of getting into other people's way.

This home thrust is more than the Englishman can bear, and he accordingly rises angrily from his chair, declaring that if Lorenzo does not instantly take himself off, he will be taken off bodily from his feet by suspension in the air.

Mire que mi irritacion  
Llegando á su colmo vá  
Y veo su vida ya  
Pendiente de un algodon.

The high words bring Julian and Concha to the scene, and fearful of the consequences of arousing still further the British lion, Lorenzo is prudently ordered by his master to leave the room. This he does after another verbal blow at Britannia as is represented by the word "Marroqui!" an abusive epithet peculiar to the natives of Arragon.

After the servant's departure Julian requests his unwelcome guest to leave the house before it is "too late," without reference to the hour, while his wife pleadingly begs that he will do so "for her sake." "Not till I have had your answer," says Mr. Henry, "As for your husband, madam, he is beside the question." The husband is also beside his wife, and takes that opportunity to whisper a few words in her ear, the result of this secret conference being that Concha tells Mr. Henry plainly that she cannot possibly correspond.

The reply develops a new phase of English character. This seems to be suicide, which every Briton, who has abandoned hope, adopts as a last resource. In conformity therefore, with popular tradition, Mr. Henry threatens to make away with himself there and then, and for this purpose takes up a convenient carving-knife and places it at his throat. His cold-blooded behaviour alarms Julian, who, after making a rush for the deadly weapon, exclaims,

"My dear sir! for heaven's sake consider; if you are really determined to put an end to your existence, I would not on any account stand in your way; only while performing that agreeable act, I beg and entreat you will not do it in my domicile, and least of all on my drawing-room carpet!"

"There is but one of two alternatives," gravely remarks the Englishman, turning to Concha; "either your love or my larynx" (*O su amor, ó mi garganta*).

In the opinion, however, of the Spaniard one other alternative remains. This is a native policeman, colloquially called (for reasons connected with his costume) a "three-cornered hat." Accordingly, Julian goes for a "*sombrero de tres picos*," and while he is absent Mr. Henry improves the occasion by making further advances to his wife. With a view to get rid of him and avoid a public scandal, the trembling Concha pretends, for the moment, to relent, and, enraptured by her words of encouragement, the Englishman seizes the lady's hand and practically imprints upon it a chaste kiss. "Oh, señora," he exclaims, "I cannot refrain from expressing my happiness in this way. And allow me to do it again, as the first was a failure." He is in the act of repeating the experiment on his knees, when the lady's husband returns unaccompanied, as, even in Spain, a policeman is never found when wanted.

JULIAN. Heavenly powers, what do I see?

MR. H. (*after another kiss*). Ask no questions. And (*rising*) farewell till to-morrow. Meanwhile you may as well prepare your last will and testament.

He retires after this, and when he is gone, there is a scene of cross purposes between Julian, who charges his wife with infidelity, and Concha, who at first indignantly protests her innocence and afterwards retaliates in turn by reminding her spouse of his various little acts of indiscretion in the past relating to milliners and dress-makers which she has hitherto overlooked, though not forgotten.

Everything is, however, satisfactorily explained in the end; the couple agree to forget and forgive, and they are on the point of locking the door and retiring for the night, when—

“At your feet, Madam,”

is heard once more, and the Englishman enters. This time he has come to remind the Spaniard of their duel, and to invite him to choose his weapons. To avoid further unpleasantness, Julian agrees to meet Mr. Henry early next day, and to humour him in response to his challenge, he mentions a “thirty-six pounder, a blunderbus, and a bomb,” as suitable implements for combating purposes, and enumerates besides, “a rifle, a bayonet, a pop-gun, a ramrod, a battering-ram, a club, and the jaw-bone of an ass. Your own,” says he. “might do as well as any other.” Foils are, however, ultimately decided upon, and with this understanding our bellicose Briton disappears; but not for long, as he shortly returns to counter-order the cup of tea which he had previously requested Lorenzo to prepare.

Concha and Julian now congratulate themselves upon having seen the last of their midnight visitor, and they are preparing once again to retire, when “Madam, at your feet,” intercepts their progress, and Mr. Henry resumes the thread of his narrative.

The Englishman has now some sad news to convey. Preoccupied as his thoughts have recently been by his new conquest, he forgot for the time being that he was a married man. Here he explains how six years ago he went through a conventional marriage ceremony with a lady who proved in every way so uncongenial, that upon the very day after the wedding he sued for a divorce. “Fortunately for you, Madame,” says he, “I have remembered the circumstance at the eleventh hour. But,” adds this specimen of absent-mindedness, “If ever I become a widower, (*to Julian*) I shall come and call *you* out, and (*to Concha*) call *you* to the hymeneal altar.”

JULIAN. Meanwhile, we may be permitted, I hope, to repose in peace. Before you retire to your own virtuous couch, sir, let me give you this piece of wholesome advice. Should you be passing this way—say in twenty years or so, pray don’t call on us at 11 p.m., and if you do endeavour to remember long before that unearthly hour, that you are a married man.

While these sentiments are being expressed, the object of them withdraws, and presuming he has gone for good, Julian—who is

overcome with sleep—suggests going to bed. The words are, however, scarcely out of the speaker's mouth, when—

“At your feet, Madam,”

announces the Englishman's return. Upon this occasion he has come back to deliver a message, “muy ajena á nuestro asunto”—of great importance to everyone present. In descending the stairs, Mr. Henry has accidentally come in contact with the author of the comedy, and that gentleman being too nervous or too modest to appear before the public, has deputed the Englishman to represent him, and at the same time to ask the good people in front what they think of the piece, with the hope that their verdict may be “favourable (*taking out his watch*) at the eleventh hour.”

It has been already stated that the revival of this little play occurred in the spring of 1868, when one of Her Majesty's British subjects undertook the leading rôle, and it was likewise intimated that the writer of these pages was present on the occasion. I may mention also that he was present on every subsequent representation of the piece that season, as will be sufficiently clear by reference to the following “Reparto de Papeles,” or cast of characters:—

CONCHA	-	-	Doña Carolina Duclós
JULIAN	-	-	Don L. Martinez Casado
LORENZO	-	-	Don Constantino Feliú
and			
MR. HENRY	-	-	Your Humble Servant.



## Paris At The Play.

By T. JOHNSON.

THE stage is not supposed to be a tribune, and, in my opinion, it is not at the theatre we seek the solution of any social problem. Alexandre Dumas *filis* inaugurated this system, and Victorien Sardou has trodden in the footsteps of the celebrated Academician; but it does not follow that both have succeeded. All dramatists should remember the old adage: *Castigat ridendo Mores*: but as to putting before the public the question of the honour of a family, or even that of an individual, with all due respect to Messieurs Dumas and Sardou, this, I consider, to be beyond the play-wright's province, and I will proceed to say why I think it is so.

The play by which Alexandre Dumas leaped into fame, and to which he owes, as far as the masses are concerned, his greatest reputation—I speak of “*La Dame aux Camélias*”—was only the exposition of a subject; the author therein did not attempt to define why or how Armand Duval loved Marguerite Gautier. He depicted love in a somewhat brutal form, it is true, but it was love, and even the sternest moralist felt obliged to accept it; first of all because there was the true ring of passion about it, and then because the author sought to draw from it no absolute conclusion. Here it may be observed that whenever dramatists set about solving social theories, they rarely arrive at any practical definition.

Did Dumas, for example, with “*La Femme de Claude*” convince the world that the murder of an erring wife was perfectly legitimate? No! not any more than Sardou with “*Georgette*” will persuade any lover that he must not espouse a young girl who is dear to him because her mother has led a scandalous life. The greatest dramatists of the world—I need mention only Shakespeare and Molière, as representing England and France—like the true geniuses they were, never maintained any humanitarian thesis. There is a lesson in all their works, but there is no pretension in the precepts taught. French dramatists seem to be overlooking

the distinction there is between novels and plays. In a book there is space for an idea to be developed, but, regarding plays, what with the rapidity of action and the requirements of the stage, it is necessary to go straight to the point without seeking to draw conclusions from a situation that should be clearly defined ; and, when a play by Sardou is in question, these remarks are all the more called for ; indeed, this author would be the first himself to acknowledge the right of the public to debate about his work, for discussion denotes merit.

Personally, I feel inclined to regret seeing Sardou walk in Dumas' footsteps ; it is hardly the best course open to this talented dramatist. The stage is a matter of convention, materially and morally ; and, to expect it to be an exact representation of real life is to ask an impossibility. In spite even of the wonderful scenery we get nowadays, every spectator knows that the castle represented is merely a matter of canvas painting, and not the result of the stonemason's labour ; and just as an architect would never have the idea of visiting a theatre to study specimens of his art, neither would a mother regulate her conduct from any stage representation she may witness. Not that "*Georgette*" is without merit. And though I consider that Sardou is on a false track in going over the ground travelled in "*Le Fils de Coralie*," "*Les Idées de Madame Aubray*," "*Odette*," "*Les Mères Répenties*," and a number of similar pieces that have never brought about any reform in our social habits, I have no intention whatever of detracting from his general great talent. "*Georgette*," as a matter of fact, ends with an interrogatory, a conclusion which cannot be expected to please spectators, who, for the most part, are eager to know what is to become of the characters before them. This, it may be contested, is the "old style" ; perhaps so, but the public like the "old style" better than some dramatists think. How many playgoers have we not all come across, who, on their return home, even, have not been able to shut out the heroine from their sight, and who have shown more or less satisfaction with the piece according to the fate reserved for her by the author. Like all Victorien Sardou's plays, "*Georgette*" has been the literary, as well as the dramatic event, of the month. I am not called upon to foretell its fate, but however successful it may be, financially, I, for one, shall never be able to speak as highly of the Academician's last work as of many that have preceded it. The plot may be

briefly told. Paula d'Alberti is the offspring of an ex-ballet girl, *ex-chanteuse* at *café concerts*, who, after blossoming into a *femme galante*, when she was called "La Belle Jojotte," finally became the Duchess of Carlington, and who, through her titled Irish husband, obtained a footing in aristocratic society. It was for the innocent Paula, rather than herself, that Georgette hankered for respectability, for Paula has been carefully brought up, and her mother is desirous of marrying her to Gontran de Chabreuil, a young man of noble lineage, a match his mother, the Countess de Chabreuil, has in no way opposed, whilst she supposes Paula (who is the friend of her niece, Aurore) to be of good family, even though her own project was to see Gontran and Aurore united. It is Clavel de Chabreuil, a brother of the stately Countess, who breaks down the edifice so carefully constructed by the Duchess of Carlington, ex-Georgette.

Clavel had known Jojotte in her early days; he had been, in fact, the friend of Paula's father, a certain Cardillac, long deceased; and he it is who reveals to the Countess, not only the secret of the girl's birth, but the terrible past of the Duchess of Carlington. Gontran pleads for the object of his choice, but his love is not of the robust order, for he submits to his mother's will, and the marriage is definitely broken off. Thus finishes the piece, which assuredly does not prove that an honourable man cannot marry the daughter of a courtesan, nor, to speak the truth, does it, any the more, prove the possibility of such an union. Paula, on learning through the indiscretion of a maid the cause of the rupture between herself and Gontran, would, but for the intervention of Clavel, feel inclined to condemn her mother. The duchess, on her side, is ready to make any sacrifice for the happiness of her child; even that of exile. But Paula (her better feelings now asserting themselves) refuses to let her mother depart. Suppose, that in "Odette" the mother had identified herself to her child, and you will have the same scene. The filial submission of Gontran is to be understood if one credits him only with a moderate love for Paula; but Shakespeare does not treat love in M. Sardou's style. Juliet, for instance, despite the parental orders given her, abandons herself and her love to Romeo; and, though maternal affection is capable, as the world's history has often proved, of the greatest heroism, the same cannot be expected of an ardent passion, which, unconsciously, but surely, breaks all barriers.

Gontran de Chabreuil reasons too much for a man desperately in love, and one of the weak points, or rather personages, in M. Sardou's play is this hero, who yields readily to the conventions of society, and thus acts in direct opposition to the theory set forth by M. Sardou at the beginning. It would have been better to have pitted against the laws of the world a love of an overpowering and resistless kind, and then we could have seen on which side lay the victory. But, no! Gontran contents himself, on leaving Paula, with a friendly shake of the hand. If there is not a fifth act, in which Gontran marries Aurora, the spectator nevertheless thoroughly understands that this nuptial ceremony is to be gone through, which takes away a deal of the interest from this lover whose feelings change so quickly.

"Georgette," however, in spite of its defects from a dramatic point of view, is a Parisian success, a success which is mainly due to the interpretation. Mdme. Tessandier has created the rôle of Georgette, Duchess of Carlington, with exquisite art, and her somewhat harsh voice admirably suits the rôle of the *ex-cabotine* who has become a fine lady. Everybody knows the easy style of Dupuis; an actor with a naturalness of manner that never stood him in better stead than it does as Captain Clavel. And nothing but praise is needed for Mdlle. Brandès as Paula and Mdme. Fromentin as Mdme. de Chabreuil, as well as for the others who help to make up a splendid *ensemble*.

Caoudal, the sculptor, made a statuette of the celebrated courtesan, Sapho, whom the ancients called the tenth muse; the model, Fanny Legrand, sat for this statue, and the artist fell in love with his model: not an unusual occurrence! Neither is it unusual that their ties should last but a short time. However, during the course of her passing fancies or adventures, Fanny Legrand acquired the name of Sapho, by which she was afterwards known by all those whose home she had for a short or long period shared. Sapho goes from the sculptor to the poet, from the poet to the engineer, and thus, descending the social scale, she becomes the mistress of an engraver, a poor wretch, who, swayed by passion for this dangerous siren, when ruined by her, could not decide to leave her; but, like the madman that he was, committed forgery, and expiated in gaol the folly of having adored to excess a woman whom dozens of men had loved before him. The crime of Joseph Flamant, the engraver, did not abate Sapho's sentiments for the prisoner; for

she was present at the trial, and on hearing the culprit's sentence, publicly displayed affection for the man ; affection that of whatever nature it may appear to be, cannot in a heart like that of Sapho, stand the test of separation.

Jean Gaussin, a young provincial, with a consulate career before him, meets Fanny Legrand at a ball. In his eyes, she is not the base courtesan, Sapho, but a woman mixing in shady company. The intimacy that springs up after the ball is not intended by Jean Gaussin to be in the least serious ; and he sets to work seriously in the cosy little room prepared for him in the capital by his uncle, Césaire, and his aunt, Divonne, who had come from the country expressly to look after the comforts of the spoiled boy, but if Jean Gaussin has forgotten the eventful evening not so Fanny Legrand, and seemingly athirst for love, terrible results ensue.

*C'est Venus toute entière à sa proie attachée.*

Sapho now longs for a quiet home, with a good fireside in winter and walks in the forest in summer, relieved by an exchange of kisses. Where is the young man, be he provincial or not, who can, with such an existence as that sketched out to him by a seductive woman, keep to the straight path ? Gaussin does not hesitate long ; besides, both the uncle Césaire and aunt Divonne are home again by this time, whereas Fanny Legrand is by his side, almost at his feet.

The spring comes, and Gaussin and Fanny Legrand are desirous of leaving Paris. As Nadaud, the poet, says, it is in a "thatched cottage, covered with moss and verdure, small for one, and yet large enough for two," that they would hide their happiness. When on this house-hunting expedition they find themselves one day at Ville d'Avray. The cottage would be quickly taken if Fanny Legrand had matters entirely in her own hand. Whilst she is arranging terms with the owner, Jean Gaussin meets with some old friends. They chat, and the name of Sapho is pronounced, when the terrible and eventful past of his mistress is revealed to him. Sick at heart, he goes away, to come back again quickly, for Sapho soon reconquers her prey.

The passion between two people that a host of considerations should keep apart, becomes a double martyrdom. Quarrels take place, each succeeding one being more violent than the last, and they resolve to part. Jean Gaussin is to go back to his people in the country, and Sapho will resume her Bohemian life. Each

reckoned without the passion that devoured them. First, it is, Fanny who is dismissed, and he goes home, and then we find Gaussin back in Paris, entreating Sapho to start with him for some far-off city, where he is appointed Consul. But the love of Sapho is dead. She has seen the engraver, Flamant, since he came out of prison. The *nostalgie de la boue* comes over her. Her heart no longer beats for Gaussin, and she leaves him without a regret, writing, for a final adieu, a letter in which she counsels him to marry some honest girl.

This is the rough plot of the new Gymnase play, or rather of the study by MM. A. Daudet and A. Belot. I have dwelt only upon the main points, because the book was already so well known that a recital of the smaller incidents seems to me unnecessary. There is not in "Sapho," as in "Georgette," any problem set forth. The play is simply a true and curious exposition of certain social customs. The authors have made no attempt to rehabilitate Sapho; she remains what she is—a depraved woman, with instincts incapable of the least concession to a man she has tired of. The type is not as rare as some people think. Whether Jean Gaussin is loved or not, his affection is always deep-rooted, otherwise he could never have tolerated life with Sapho, and but for this passion of his having saturated his whole system, how would he have been able to endure the presence of Flamant's child that Sapho has harboured, to say nothing of putting up with so worthless a woman, whose shame did not prevent him loving her?

I will not argue as to whether such a picture as this is agreeable to look upon, or whether it is not in some respects perhaps misleading; I merely, to use a metaphor, acknowledge the authenticity of the picture, and on that score I consider Daudet and Belot have incontestably succeeded. Their difficulty lay in making the public accept the character of Sapho, and it was, moreover, incumbent on them to find an actress capable of playing so trying a rôle. It must not be forgotten that Sapho is not an ordinary courtesan. She is not a Dame aux Camélias, whose love for Armand Duval is said so to regenerate her that she dies of it; neither is she another Marco, the *fille de marbre* of Parrière, who only judges of man from a money point of view. Sapho gives and does not sell herself; her love, when she loves, is in this way sincere, namely, that she can transfigure herself, and become what her admirer of the moment wants her to be; but loving no longer,

she is a common-place creature, going from studio to studio. It is a double *rôle*, therefore, that the actress has to interpret, and Madame Jane Hading is entitled to the highest encomiums for the marvellous talent she has brought to bear upon a difficult character by her acting as Sapho. Madame Jane Hading rises to the front rank amongst French actresses, and the expectations that were formed of her in "Le Maître de Forges" have been fully realised. They have been superseded, I think, because the character is in many respects a repugnant part for an actress of refinement to grapple with, especially in presence of a critical audience like that of the Gymnase. To attain fame on the stage it is, of course, wise on the part of any actress to have no positive predelection for, or prejudice against, any distinctive line of business. Look at Rachel. After "Phedre" she played "Le Moineau de Lerbie;" and after "Théodora," Mdme. Sarah Bernhardt will be playing "Marion Delorme." Without making any comparisons, I give it as my opinion that in the theatrical world a star of some magnitude has arisen in Mdme. Jane Hading, whose artistic career bids fair to be great. M. Damala, in the *rôle* of Gaussin, apart from a defective intonation, acquits himself admirably in the scenes of passion, for the forcible expression of which the actor is well fitted. His task is not an easy one, but he accomplishes it very efficiently. As is the custom at the Gymnase, all the secondary and minor *rôles* are well interpreted. In proof of this, I need only mention the names of Landrol, Lagrange, and Mesdames Darlaud and Desclauzas.

To sum up, from a book which did not seem to have the materials of a play, Daudet and Belot have adapted a remarkable piece. The conventional theatrical story has no place in "Sapho," for the *jeune premier* does not marry the *ingénue*; but these clever collaborateurs have given us a sketch of Paris life, interesting even, I venture to say, to those who do not know it; whereas, for those who do, many a souvenir will be evoked. Consequently, it will more than suffice to draw the public for a hundred nights to come.



## Our Musical Box.

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CONCERTS were plentiful and good in quality throughout the greater part of the past month. It is with sincere pleasure that I am able to credit all the new orchestral and choral enterprises (dealt with at some length in my last budget) with unquestionable and well-merited success. The third Brinsmead Concert had to contend against one of the most fiendish attacks of bad weather that ever yet tried to drown and snuff out a juvenile musical undertaking by sheer raining and blowing ; but the programme was so attractive that it filled St. James's Hall to overflowing, and with an audience of music-lovers, such as true artists rejoice to sing and play to. Kapellmeister Ganz, the *chef* of the evening, had arranged an interesting menu, and had manifestly bestowed more time and pains upon rehearsal than his predecessors in office—I mean, of course, in connection with the Brinsmead enterprise. He conducted, moreover, with laudable steadiness, spirit, and discretion—consequently all the orchestral numbers, even the more intricate episodes of the “Lenore” symphony, went extremely well. Absolute novelties did not figure in the programme ; but two of its items were nearly new to the London public, the first, M.Saint-Saëns’s P.F. concerto in C minor, having been produced at one of the Chevalier Ganz’s concerts some years ago, when it achieved a *succès d'estime*, and was heard no more until the other night ; whilst the second, a septet in E flat for P.F., trumpet, and strings by the same composer, had only been heard theretofore by Londoners in the form of a “morceau d’occasion à quatre mains,” arranged for the pianoforte by M. Saint-Saëns himself. At the Brinsmead concert of December 5, both these compositions were presented to the audience under exceptionally favourable circumstances, for the author of their being took part in their performance, and it may fairly be assumed that their interpretation was pretty nearly what, in his opinion, it ought to have been. Indeed, I have no doubt that this was the case. But they failed to stir those present to utter anything like enthusiastic approval. The fact is that, like the majority of the French maestro’s more important works, this concerto and septet are so ingenious, and so learned, and so painstaking, that a conscientious effort to pay them the full attention they deserve results in no inconsiderable weariness to their hearers. If M. Saint Saëns’ music were as sympathetic as it is clever, he would be the first composer of the day. I might go even farther, without fear of contradiction at the hands of any skilled musician, and say that no composer of any period has exceeded him in mere cleverness ; not even Beethoven, Berlioz, or Wagner. He is, moreover,

a contrapuntist of the first water, and as fertile in contrivances as J. S. B. himself. But all his music, unlike the poet of the Latin adage, is "made not born." One is impressed by its immense laboriousness; not by its beauty. I have heard works by Saint-Saëns to which the famous protest against intricate dullness attributed to Rossini, seemed to me eminently applicable. "Difficult! would it were impossible!" The most (I had almost written the only) spontaneous composition of his with which I am acquainted is "La Danse Macabre"; and that, tremendously effective though it be when adequately performed, is after all little more than a musical jest of a peculiarly grim character. To revert to his concerto and septet, produced at the third Brinsmead Concert, they were exactly what, before I heard them, I expected them to be; clever enough to make a clean sweep of all the medals and prizes for composition given by all the European Conservatoires put together; but as forlorn of that inner emotion which places a composer *en rapport* with an audience by the magical contagion of genuine passion, as in a proposition of Euclid. M. Saint-Saëns' pianoforte playing exhibits a marked psychical affinity to his talent for composition. It is accomplished, musicianly, intelligent, technically irreproachable—everything that it should be, except sympathetic. There are not twenty pianists living who can play as well; but there are hundreds upon hundreds, counting in the first flight of *dilettanti*, who can play far better. In a word, to me M. Saint-Saëns is a great musical disappointment. Not so Mr. Edward Lloyd, however, who sang too well for his own interests on December 5, eliciting redemands which, though fully justified by the supreme quality of his performance, were unreasonable in number, and so peremptory to boot, that he could not choose but defer to them. Those who would discover how an English song may be sung to absolute perfection should keep a sharp look-out on concert announcements to come; and, when they see Mr. Lloyd set down in black and white to give his vocal rendering of Lover's "Wake from the Grave," should make a dead certainty of attending that particular musical entertainment. They will never repent the sum expended upon their vouchers.

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It has caused me great regret to learn that the meaning and purpose of some remarks published in the last Musical-Box, and having relation to Dr. Engel's song, "Darling Mine," have been misinterpreted by that ripe musician and able critic as intended on my part to prove damaging to the composition in question, and painful to himself. Nothing could have been farther from my mind than either of these unfriendly objects when I penned the lines recording my opinion that "Darling Mine" was unsuitable to Mdme. Patti's voice. If my expression of that opinion was in the least disagreeable to Dr. Engel, I am sorry; but it was only an opinion, after all, formed upon technical details of the song, such as intervals, compass, &c., and by no means implying any slur upon the musical merits of "Darling Mine." Had I written that Beethoven's "In questa tomba oscura" was unsuitable to Mdme. Patti's voice, and would, therefore, probably not figure frequently as an item in her concert-room

*répertoire*, I should not have expected to be reproved for denouncing that composition as worthless or worse. The fact is, *brevis esse labore, obscurus fio*. When I alluded to the curiosity expressed by friends of Mdme. Patti as to her reasons for singing "Darling Mine," and mentioned that assurances had reached her to the effect that that curiosity was shared by members of the musical public, I should have gone on to explain that the musical profession favours the development of a peculiarly green and acrid jealousy in its followers; that the advantages accruing to a living composer through the performance of his works by any singer of paramount talent and popularity are very considerable; that Mdme. Patti, in common with other gifted vocal artists, is continuously beset by applications, varying between the piteous appeal and the haughty menace, from composers to sing their songs; and that whenever she summons up courage to select one of these for performance from among the thousands that reach her every year, all the song-writers whose productions she has *not* chosen lift up their voices in loud protest and complaint, and are especially eager to know (referring to the song on which she has fixed) "what she can see in that *thing* entitling it to the high honour of being sung by her?" It was to curiosity of this class that I referred in the paragraph to which Dr. Engel has taken exception. Surely that veteran musician, to whom the bitter humours of his profession are no mystery, must have been well aware, when the great joy befel him of hearing "Darling Mine" inimitably sung by his old friend Adelina Patti, whom he has known from her childhood, that what was honey and asphodel to him was gall and wormwood to scores of other composers; and that, consequently, the fact that Mdme. Patti has been pestered by inquiries of the above description, emanating from musicians, cannot possibly be held to impair the musical merits of his song. On the contrary, the circumstances that Mdme. Patti, whose artistic intelligence is of a very high class, chose to sing "Darling Mine," and that her doing so lashed a great many less favoured song-writers into paroxysms of envious exasperation, would seem to indicate that the song must be an uncommonly good one. That I have said or inferred anything to the contrary, I explicitly deny. No one knows better than Dr. Engel, who is apt to pass somewhat severe sentences upon the conceited and incompetent persons of either sex whose rubbish deluges the musical market, that it is extremely difficult for a critic, however goodnatured and tolerant he may be, to steer clear of composers' susceptibilities. Praise, superlative in quality and unlimited in quantity, is the only pabulum they can digest with any comfort or satisfaction to themselves. Comment, however moderate in tone, they regard as personal attack, prompted by private malignity; instead of asking themselves "Is my sonata, or song, or opera, or symphony really as good as it appears to me to be?" they shriek, "Good Heavens! wha<sup>t</sup> have I done to this ruffian that he should thus truculently assail me?" If Mdme. Patti had ever done me the honour to sing a song of mine in public, and all the other song-writers in the United Kingdom had written to her, asking her what she could possibly have been thinking of to degrade the art of music and blemish her own reputation by lending herself to the promulgation

of such pernicious drivel, their view of my composition would leave me calm. Similarly, when "Darling Mine" elicited a triple redemand from a fashionable Brighton audience the other day, Dr. Engel scored so largely that he can afford to smile benevolently at any objections raised to that lyric by his fellow-composers.

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Carl Rosa has been interviewed again in the provinces—this time by a Newcastle journalist, to whom he has disclosed his programme for the coming operatic season, which will open at Liverpool about the middle of January. He contemplates the production of three novelties in the course of his *tournée*; Mackenzie's new opera, which is already in the printers' hands, and will, ere long, be published by Messrs. Novello and Co.; "Fadette" (*Les Dragons de Villars*) by Maillard and Grist, with Marie Rôze (who will create the title rôle), Julia Gaylord, and Barton McGuckin; and "Ruy Blas," by Marchetti and Hugo, the principal characters to be sustained by Marie Rôze and Leslie Crotty. Mr. Rosa announces his intention of giving that able and earnest musician Mr. F. Conder, a commission to compose an opera for his company, as soon as a suitable libretto shall come to hand.

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Few living men, if any, are better qualified by intelligence or study to discourse instructively upon the subject of the late Richard Wagner's operatic works than is Mr. Carl Armbruster, the accomplished conductor who has been intimately associated with and concerned in all the productions of Wagnerian "tone-drama" in this metropolis ever since Hans Richter first undertook the gigantic task of popularising those noble creations of genius in a musical *milieu* at that time strongly prejudiced against them. On the 10th ult., Mr. Armbruster delivered the last of his series of luminous lectures "On the Musical Dramas of Richard Wagner," at the London Institution, before a numerous and highly sympathetic audience, which listened with intense interest to his eloquent exposition of the dead Master's musical doctrines. He laid especial stress upon the progressive character of Wagner's operatic compositions, comparing them to sequent notes in an ascending scale, the culminating tone of which is "Parsifal," an unmistakably Christian drama—a subtle allegory, instinct with sublimer motives than the mere earthly passions that animate the episodes of romance or folk-lore, upon which his earlier operas were built up. Mr. Armbruster dilated with contagious fervour upon the extraordinary force of Wagner's genius, which has overcome the formidable resistance once offered to its influence in this country, and has established its cult as firmly here as in the Fatherland itself. As a reformer, Wagner ranks with Luther and Shakespeare, in Mr. Armbruster's opinion; as a past-master in the art of orchestral writing, he is unsurpassed, even by Beethoven. Mr. Armbruster declared himself well satisfied with the development of public taste for Wagner's music hitherto achieved in England; but he held it to be essential to the full appreciation of the more advanced works (e.g., "Tristan," "The Tetralogy," and "Parsifal") that these latter should be performed in English, to which end the orga-

nisation and establishment of a permanent national opera house are requisite. Miss Cramer, Mr. Thorndyke, and Mr. Guy supplied vocal illustrations to Mr. Armbruster's discourses with conspicuous ability, whilst the lecturer himself, whose gifts as a pianist are of a quite exceptional nature, delighted his hearers at intervals with such fine interpretative renderings of Wagnerian *motive* as are too seldom heard in London concert-rooms. A few days later (Dec. 15) Mr. Armbruster delivered a lecture at the Westbourne Park Institute "On the historical development of pianoforte music," copiously illustrating the steps of advancement (in *technique* and the use of tone-colour) effected since the days of J. S. Bach, the founder of pianism. In the course of this interesting entertainment Mr. Armbruster played selections from the works of ten great composers for the pianoforte, concluding his list of specimen *morceaux* by a masterly performance of Liszt's tremendous transcription of the Tannhaeuser March, a very miracle of difficulty. Westbournia came to the front in great force on the occasion, and displayed by repeated and long-enduring outbursts of enthusiastic applause its gratitude to Mr. Armbruster for an entertainment of which it would be impossible to speak too highly.

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"The Gipsy Baron," Johann Strauss's newest comic opera, with the third act of which he was still busy at Ostend last September during my brief sojourn in "Flemish Brighton," has been produced at the Wieden Theatre, in Vienna, with all imaginable *éclat*, and promises to enjoy as long and remunerative a run as the Fledermaus itself, which made its composer's fortune. The book of the *Zigeuner Baron* is by Moritz Jokai, the renowned Magyar novelist and playwright, and is distinguished from the majority of latter-day operatic *libretti* by an absolutely original plot, the interest of which, however, is so exclusively Austro-Hungarian that I fear it may handicap the opera for performance in Paris and London. A brief sketch of the story may possibly, however, be fraught with interest to the readers of THE THEATRE; I will therefore do my best to compress it into the smallest space compatible with intelligibility. Shortly before the outbreak of the War of Succession Maria Theresa amnestied a number of exiled Magyar nobles, amongst them one Barinkay, whose father—a crony of the last Pasha of Temesvar—is generally understood to have annexed the Austrian military chest during the Austro-Turkish struggle for the possession of Lower Hungary, and to have buried the treasure thus acquired. Young Barinkay returns to the paternal acres, where an old gipsy-woman foretells all manner of good luck to him, and a family friend—one Carnero, a Commissioner of Public Morals—advises him to lose no time in espousing Arsenia, the only daughter of a wealthy but illiterate pig-breeder. This worthy is ready and willing to consent to the match; but Arsenia, besides being in love with a youth of her own choice cannot forget that her maternal great-grandfather was an Archimandrite, who would be unlikely to rest in his grave were she to marry anybody of a lower rank than that of baron. Barinkay, who belongs to the untitled nobility, regards this pretension as quite uncalled for in a pig-breeder's daughter, and vows to be avenged on the ambitious maiden. In

furtherance of this amiable purpose a tribe of gipsies turns up, and elects Barinkay as its chief, voivode, or "baron." He accepts office, and very opportunely falls in love with Saffi, a pretty Romany girl, about whose pedigree there is a mystery. She accepts him, and they are wed, after a fashion. Shortly afterwards he discovers the hidden treasure, which is promptly claimed by his family friend, the Moral Commissioner, as State property. This functionary then denounces Barinkay to Count Homonay, a recruiting officer, who arrives unexpectedly upon the scene, as being in illegal possession of the long-lost military chest, and, moreover, as having contracted intimate but unsanctified relations with Saffi. Barinkay, when interrogated with respect to the latter of his alleged delinquencies, somewhat frivoIously explains that "he was married by a bullfinch in the presence of a couple of storks." Count Homonay raises no objection to this ornithological rite, but hints that Barinkay will do well to give up the treasure and 'list for a soldier. He does both, with the promptitude born of necessity, and bids farewell to Saffi, who about this time is suddenly discovered to be the only surviving daughter of the last Pasha of Temesvar. In the third act the Gipsy-Baron, having distinguished himself during a campaign, is raised to the peerage by the Empress-Queen, and regularises his position, as far as Saffi is concerned, by the aid of Holy Church. Arseno's masher is condoned by the pig-breeder, under the soothing influence of a profitable army contract, procured for him through the influence of Barinkay; in short, everybody is made happy in 3-2 time, to the strains of such an inspiriting waltz as only Johann Strauss, of all men living, can compose. Some of the numbers are charming; for instance in Act 1, all the songs (four in number), a Bridecake chorus, and a duet accompanied by full choir; in Act 2 an admirable waltz for soprano, a chorus of gipsies, a wild czardas of the true Magyar type, and a brilliant finale *in tempo di Walzer*. The third act is hardly up to the musical mark of its predecessors; but on the whole "Der Zigeuner-Baron" is the most important operatic work as yet given to the world by the "Waltz-King" of the Kaiserstadt on the "beautiful blue Danube."

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Sophie Menter, whose magnificent playing I hope to hear again in London before the close of the 1886 season, tells a good story against herself in connection with her first appearance at a Court concert in the Berlin Schloss. Let me give it, as nearly as possible, in her own words:—"It was on that occasion, partly through inexperience and partly through overpowering nervousness, that I committed the greatest blunder of my whole life; which is really saying a good deal! I knew accurately enough what Wagner, Liszt, and Verdi were like, but I had never seen the Emperor William; for I was quite a young girl, and during my sojourn in the German capital I had thought of no one but Tausig, my teacher. He was all Berlin to me. Having, moreover, to practise twelve hours a day, which was my lot at that time, you may well imagine that I had not much leisure for staring at the photographs in the shop-windows. Just when I was working my very hardest, I received a 'command' to play at

Court. Of course, I obeyed. When I had finished my solo, an old gentleman came up to me, and expressed his approval of my performance. I thought to myself, ‘You are the first to speak—you must be the Emperor.’ So I said ‘Your Majesty’ to him. He looked me hard in the face, and presently replied, ‘You are mistaken, young lady; I am not the Emperor.’ So saying, he walked away; and I noticed a general smile which made me feel profoundly uncomfortable. A little later on another grey old gentleman greeted me. I was desperately embarrassed; but it suddenly struck me that my second interlocutor *must* be the Emperor—he looked so extremely venerable!—and I ventured upon another faltering ‘Your Majesty’; whereupon he laughed in my face, introduced himself to me as ‘a Prince of the Imperial House’; and left me, crimson and speechless with confusion. Immediately afterwards, a third old gentleman approached me, exclaiming, ‘Mademoiselle, is it really possible that you do not know the Emperor when you see him? Well, then—I am the Emperor!’ He then offered me his arm, laughing heartily, and conducted me round the great drawing-room, chatting away in the most friendly manner. This, however, was not my only mishap at the Court of Berlin. One evening, I was bidden to play at a Wednesday tea-party, given by the Empress. Whilst awaiting my turn I was sitting down, and next to me was a nice-looking young officer, whom I took for an aide-de-camp. When the time came for me to play, I asked him to open the piano for me, which he did; and presently, feeling thirsty, I told him that I should like an ice. He hurried away to the buffet, and brought me a delicious *banachée*. After we had conversed for some minutes with all imaginable gaiety, he suddenly observed, ‘Gracious lady, allow me to make myself known to you. I am Prince William of Prussia.’ And I had made him open the piano for me!”

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Surely the strangest proposition ever tendered to a prima-donna was the startling business-like offer made to Christine Nilsson not long ago by an American *impresario*, who expressed his desire to engage the Swedish songstress for a series of monster concerts, to be given in the recently “developed” region of Yellowstone Park. Terms, one thousand dollars for each performance, on condition that Madame Nilsson, dressed as Gretchen in “Faust,” should nightly sing Gounod’s ballad “The King of Thule,” seated before a Penelope sewing-machine in lieu of the traditional spinning wheel. A transparency, ingeniously let into the frame of the machine, and rendered intensely lustrous by the agency of Edison’s Electric Light, had been expressly devised to display the name of the patentee of the Penelope sewing-machine. Madame Nilsson, it is stated, whilst admitting the liberality of the remuneration offered to her, objected her reluctance to identify herself with so amazing an anachronism as the presentment of a sixteenth-century heroine taking a spell at the latest thing in contemporary sewing-machines. But the *impresario* earnestly assured her that his fellow-citizens in the Wild West were by no means fanatical upon the subject of the “unities,” and did not cleave to archæological accuracy of detail with the servility engendered

by European prejudice. His sole object in engaging her for the tour in question, he added, was to make the Penelope sewing-machine "take solid root" in the West; and he failed to see what it could matter to Madame Nilsson whether she sang her little song to the accompaniment of a "played-out old relic of barbarism, or of a high-pressure symbol of modern civilisation." It appears that Madame Nilsson eventually declined to enter into an arrangement altogether out of keeping with her sense of the "fitness of things"; but no one will deny that, from the advertiser's point of view, the suggestion submitted to her was a brilliant one, equally creditable to the ingenuity and moral courage of its originator. There is genius, as well as audacity, in the notion of soliciting so great an artist as Christine Nilsson to impersonate "Marguerite at the Sewing Machine."

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Mr. De Lara's "Vocal Recitals," as entertainments of a peculiarly refined and artistic character, constitute an attractive feature of the winter and summer musical seasons. Their programmes invariably include important novelties by the favourite song-writers of the day, including the concert-giver himself, who may justly claim to have produced a larger number of unquestionably popular songs than any living composer of his years—songs, moreover, that are no less cordially admired by the skilled musician than by the mere dilettante of the drawing-room. The recital given by Mr. De Lara on the 15th ult. at Steinway Hall was an extremely interesting one. Six of its vocal numbers were new to the public which received them, one and all, with marked favour, thoroughly deserved, in every case, by their intrinsic merits. The first of these novelties (observing the order in which Mr. De Lara introduced them to his audience) was Mr. Hervey's "Heart of my Heart," a really beautiful setting of some transcendental words by Mr. William Hardinge. Of the three new songs composed by Mr. De Lara which followed this charming lyric hard at heel it would be difficult to say which is the most satisfactory, for each is quite excellent of its kind. In "Forsworn" society vocalists of both sexes will welcome a passionate melody, easy to sing, and easier still to remember. In my opinion, its claims to wide and lasting popularity are every whit as valid as those of "Only a Song," and "Mine To-day." It is tuneful, spontaneous, and all a-glow with genuine love fervour. "Through the Hawthorn Dell," and "Dedication" are fascinating little idylls, lifted high above the ordinary pastoral *niveau* by a sweet irresistible enthusiasm, equally pervading Mr. De Lara's music and Miss Probyn's words. The union of these two shining talents is a singularly happy one. As a lyric composer Signor Paolo Tosti has scored many distinguished successes in this country; to their number must now be added "My Love and I," through which runs a vein of playful tenderness that is at once touching and exhilarating. This lovely song will assuredly be sung in every concert-room throughout the United Kingdom during more than one season to come; and I venture to predict a similar distinction to De Lara's "Forsworn." They are both published by Messrs. Chappell and Co. Another novelty with a brilliant future is Mrs.

Moncrieff's "For Old Custom's Sake," a serenade *alla Spagnuola*, which tells a simple love-tale in strains alternately persuasive and sprightly—sometimes in the minor, sometimes in the major mood. The song abounds in catching phrases and pretty contrasts. Deliciously sung by De Lara, it was warmly redemanded by a winter-afternoon audience, chiefly composed of ladies. Volumes could not more convincingly testify to the captivating effect it exercised over its hearers. The concert-giver had set himself a heavy task—that of singing no fewer than twenty songs, several of which taxed his vocal resources somewhat severely; but nothing could be more genial and finished than the whole performance, of which the last number was sung every whit as tunefully and vivaciously as the first. Miss Eissler contributed three carefully played violin *soli* to the entertainment, which was further embellished by Mr. Beerbohm Tree's superb recital of an intensely pathetic poem by Mr. G. R. Sims. On the whole, a *matinée* to be remembered with unalloyed pleasure.

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Amongst the new musical publications forwarded to me in the course of the past month are several of which I cannot say anything agreeable, as they belong to the category of valueless rubbish. *Non ragionam di lor*; far be it from me to hinder the public from buying such stuff, if its taste be that way. On the other hand I feel justified in calling attention to "Tosti's last," a simple, pathetic song, hight "The love that came too late"; to "Tripping," an easy pianoforte piece by Signor (or is it Herr?) Francesco Berger, which may be safely recommended to juvenile sight-readers; to "The empty saddle," a bold bass ditty by Mr. Hermann Klein, who has set Mr. Malcolm Salaman's spirited verses to appropriate strains; and to Mr. G. F. Hatton's "For ever nearer," a drawing-room lyric refreshingly free from offence. All these works are published by Messrs. Chappell, who have also brought out a handy little book containing the Gilbertian libretti of eight Sullivan-esque operas, rare good reading, with at least half-a-dozen hearty laughs in every page. This reprint is cheap and carefully produced; as it contains the words of the "Mikado" its claims to public patronage are not exclusively of a retrospective nature. Unqualified praise must be accorded to a charming song, published under the title of "Ever since then!" by Messrs. Hutchings and Co.—a melodious and extremely pretty setting, by Mr. Gustav Ernest, of some passionate and poetical words, breathing the wild regrets of disappointed love, written by Mr. Clement Scott. I can cordially recommend this production to concert and drawing-room singers alike. If sung with due fervour it cannot fail to make a hit.

WM. BEATTY-KINGSTON.

P.S.—I feel it to be my duty, at the eleventh hour, to add to this budget a brief mention of Mr. Hamilton Clarke's incidental music to the English version of "Faust," produced by Mr. Irving at the Lyceum Theatre on the 19th ult. The music in question consisted of two entr'actes and a witches' ballet or divertissement, of which works it is not too much to say that they constituted one of the most interesting and attractive fea-

tues of a performance replete with artistic merit of the highest order. Mr. Clarke's compositions are in every respect worthy of the episodes—successively pathetic, weird, and sublime—which they are intended to illustrate. They abound in striking *motivi*, in musical learning and fancy, and in rich instrumentation. Contrasted with the dull platitudes of Marschner (a diluted Weber), with the pedantic long-windedness of Spohr, and with the thin frivolity of Lindpaintner—by all of which they were preceded—they stood out in high relief as strong, luminous, and genial musical entities, suggested by genuine inspiration and wrought out with masterly ability. Mr. Irving's fine taste and profound sagacity never found happier expression than in his choice of so brilliantly gifted a composer as Mr. Clarke for the fulfilment of a mission to which so many of Goethe's musical fellow-countrymen have proved unequal. I, for one, shall not be surprised if this Englishman's incidental music to the greatest of all German stage-plays obtains as cordial and grateful recognition in the Fatherland as it undoubtedly will receive here, when it shall be the turn of musical critics to have their say about the supremely intelligent production of "Faust" for which London is indebted to Mr. Henry Irving.

## Our Play-Box.

### "FAUST."

The adaptation by W. G. WILLS, in a prologue and five acts, from Goethe's tragedy.  
Produced at the Lyceum Theatre on Saturday, December 19, 1885.

Mortals:		Spirits:
Faust ...	MR. CONWAY.	Martha ... MRS. STIRLING.
Valentine ...	MR. ALEXANDER.	Bessy ... MISS L. PAYNE.
Frosch ...	MR. HARBURY.	Ida ... MISS BARNETT.
Altmayer ...	MR. HAVILAND.	Alice ... MISS COLERIDGE.
Brander ...	MR. F. TYARS.	Catherin ... MISS MILLS.
Siebil ...	MR. JOHNSON.	Margaret ... MISS ELLEN TERRY.
Student ...	MR. N. FORBES.	Mephistopheles ... MR. HENRY IRVING.
Burgomaster ...	MR. H. HOWE.	
Citizens ...	{ MR. HEMSLEY. MR. LOWTHIER.	Witches ... { MR. MEAD. MR. CARTER. MR. ARCHER. MR. CLIFFORD.
Soldier ...	MR. M. HARVEY.	

WHEN all that which is unsubstantial in the revived discussion of Goethe's poem—so much a part of Goethe's self!—shall have evaporated, there will still be a solid residuum to justify Mr. Irving's hope in the valid, practical issue of his latest stage work. If it should take people to a study of the original, as he submitted, in the well-timed words addressed to his audience on the first night of this notable production, a desired end will be gained. Popular representations, let it be remembered, gave the first impetus to the legendary history of the Devil and Dr. Faustus. That legend, from being the primitive argument of puppet-shows and pantomime—we still see the traditional war of good and evil powers in the opening scene of "Harlequin Jack the Giant-Killer," or "Mother Bunch"—was raised into the service of poetry, of philosophy, of religion. The Church and the Reformation, Catholic and Lutheran, seized it by turns. For all dramatic purpose it closed with the First Part; nor is it necessary, or even in the smallest degree a thing to be

desired, that we should burden our consideration of this fragment, perfect in itself, although a fragment, by further reference to the Second Part, which bodily cuts adrift the heart-moving story of Margaret, and leaves it to float of itself for ever on the pitying mind of man.

Stieglitz spoke for thousands of honest, thoughtful souls when he deprecated the breaking of the spell by Goethe's own magic hand, and said "The heart-thrilling last scene of the First Part, Margaret's heavenly salvation, and the giving-over of Faust, veiled by mists from our sight, to inexorable Destiny, on whom the duty of condemning or acquitting him devolved, should have remained the last ; as, indeed, for sublimity and impressiveness, it perhaps stands alone in the whole circle of literature." The two prologues, neither of which is that which is called the prologue, being no other than the first scene of the poem, at the Lyceum, should indeed be read very carefully. One, at least, is totally unrepresentable. The other, placed first in the book, may be compared with Gay's prologue to his "Beggar's Opera," giving the key-note to the scheme which runs in the author's mind. A manager of a strolling actor troop confers with his poet and Mr. Merryman. Between them, the motive of the drama is subtly foreshadowed. "I wish particularly," says the manager, "to please the multitude, because it lives and lets lives." He pictures the crowd streaming towards "our booth," and forcing itself through "the narrow portal of grace," breaking their necks for a ticket, as in a famine at bakers' doors for bread. "It is the poet," says he, "that works this miracle on people so various." Conjured to rack his brains with so good an object, that day, the poet begs that he may hear nothing of the motley multitude. Conduct him, he implores, to the quiet, heavenly nook, where alone pure enjoyment blooms for the singer—where godlike love and friendship create and cherish the blessings of the heart. Then he speaks of posterity, and rouses the instant ire and impatience of Mr. Merryman. Suppose *he*, forsooth, were to talk about posterity! Who would there be in that case to make fun for contemporaries? He is not unreasonable, for he will grant you Fancy with all her choruses; and you may likewise let Reason, Understanding, Feeling, Passion, be heard, but not—mark this well—not without Folly.

"Or incident," breaks in the manager, as if he remembered Horace.

Segnus irritant animos demissa per aures,  
Quam quæ sunt oculis subjecta fidelibus, et quæ  
Ipse sibi tradit spectator.

People come to look. That is their greatest pleasure. You can only subdue the mass by mass. Give them enough to gape at with astonishment, and each eventually picks out something for himself. What avails it to present an entirety? The public will pull it to pieces for you, notwithstanding. At this, the poet exclaims against the baseness of such a handicraft. Not in the least mortified by the reproof, the manager tells his playwright that a proper workman chooses a

proper tool for his purpose. "Consider," says he, "you have only soft wood to split." Of the people you are writing for, one is driven by ennui to hear your fine speeches, another comes satiated from an ever-loaded table, another from reading the newspapers; and heaven knows what they will do or where they will go when the play is over. "Begone," says the poet, who is very much of Wilhelm Meister's way of thinking, "Begone, and seek thyself another servant." By what, he goes on to ask, in long-drawn eloquence, doth the poet subdue every element? Is it not by the harmony which bursts forth from his breast, and draws the world back again into his heart? In the course of a very rational reply, some part of which would have done credit to Lord Bacon—and, indeed, is clearly in the vein of that philosophy which holds that a "mixture of lies doth ever add pleasure," and that, if there were taken from men's minds vain opinions, flattering hopes, and false valuations, they would become "poor drunken things, full of melancholy and indisposition, and unpleasing to themselves—" Mr. Merryman touches a string which sets the poet off again at a hand-gallop. "There is no such thing," says the first, "as pleasing one who is formed; one who is forming will always be grateful."

"Then," says the poet, and beautifully he does say, "give me back again the times when I myself was still forming; when a fountain of crowded lays sprang freshly and unbrokenly forth; when mists veiled the world before me, the bud still promised miracles; when I gathered the thousand flowers that profusely filled all the dales! I had nothing, and yet enough,—the longing after truth and the pleasure in delusion! Give me back those impulses untamed, the deep pain-fraught happiness, the energy of hate, the might of love!—Give me back my youth!" Addressing the poet as "Old gentleman," Mr. Merryman tells him it is his duty, in spite of age, to sweep along, with happy wanderings, to a self-appointed aim, and that he will be honoured not the less on that account. It is observable that while the poet may now and then be suspected of talking like a fool, and while Mr. Merryman, on the other hand, is by no means such a fool as he looks, the man who chiefly speaks common-sense in a practical, straightforward, business-like way, is the manager. He tells his companions and servants there have been words enough. He must now see deeds. Why stand talking about being in the vein? Hesitation never *is* in the vein! If you give yourself out for a poet command poetry. He bids them both understand what he wants; he would fain have strong drink; so now let them brew away immediately. They are to spare neither scenery nor mechanism. Then, foreshadowing the second prologue, which is in Heaven, he finishes by telling them they are free to use the greater and the lesser lights, and to squander the stars. "There is no want of water, fire, rocks, beasts, and birds. So tread, in this narrow booth, the whole circle of creation, and travel, with considerate speed, from Heaven, through the world, to Hell."

Till this next prologue, "The Prologue in Heaven," be carefully read and understood, it is utterly impossible to see the motive of the drama in its true light; and the proof of this, without offence be it spoken, is that the drama at the Lyceum is advisedly and deliberately presented in a light which is far from true—which is indeed rather an ingenious and quasi-artistic metaphysical darkness; and that the audience, wonderfully corresponding with the mass we have heard described, in Horatian terms, by the manager in Prologue Number One, is "subdued by mass," and made to admire a representation which indeed is admirable, but which is wrong. Evidently they have not, in general, conned the second prologue, which Goethe wrote with great care to explain his intention, a fact that is placed beyond doubt, seeing that the two prologues were added at a time when most of the work had been written and re-modelled. Assuming a mediæval *naïveté* which, to any reader of old religious books, or to such as are tolerably familiar with the Miracle-plays, is an acquittal of irreverence, Goethe presents as the persons in his second Prologue the Lord and the Three Archangels, Raphael, Gabriel, and Michael, who sing an opening hymn of praise. The strain has hardly ceased when Mephistopheles, with an assumed tone of mingled frankness and respect, such as a privileged servant might adopt in speaking to his human master, brings a report of earthly matters. "Man," he says, "the little god of the world, is as odd as on the first day. He would lead a somewhat better life had you not given him a glimmering of Heaven's light. He calls it reason, and uses it only to be the most brutal of brutes." The Lord asks—"Do you know Faust?" "The Doctor?" returns Mephistopheles, playfully bandying interrogation. "My servant," is the reply. "Verily," rejoins the fiend, "he serves you after a manner of his own. The fool's meat and drink are not of earth. The ferment of his spirit impels him to the far-away. He himself is half conscious of his madness. Of Heaven he demands its brightest stars, and of earth its every highest enjoyment. And all the near and all the far content not his deeply agitated breast." The Lord answers—"Although he does but serve me in perplexity now, I shall soon lead him into light." With diabolical effrontery, Mephistopheles retorts—"What will you wager? You shall lose him yet if you give me leave to guide him quietly my own way." "So long," replies the Lord, "as he lives upon the earth, so long he is not forbidden to thee. Man is liable to error while his struggle lasts." It is permitted, then, to Mephistopheles that he shall divert Faust's spirit from its original source, and bear him, if he can seize him, down the steep path, and stand abashed at last when compelled to own that a good man in his dark strivings against impulses that jar with his better nature may still be conscious of the right way. Mephistopheles answers boldly, "Well, well; only it will not last long. I am not at all in pain for my wager. If I succeed, excuse my triumphing with my whole soul." It is a wager, then, Faust himself being the stakes. Mephistopheles is left free to act as he likes. Of all the spirits tha

deny, the scoffer is the least offensive to God. The concluding words of the Deity, addressed to Mephistopheles—for the subsequent language is evidently spoken as a benediction to the Heavenly Host—are, “Man’s activity is all too prone to slumber: he soon gets tired of unconditional repose. I am therefore glad to give him a companion, who stirs and works, and must, as devil, be doing.” The short characteristic soliloquy of Mephistopheles, after the stage-direction—“Heaven closes; the Archangels disperse,” is one of the stumbling-blocks with translators. *Der Alte* is construed by Shelley as The Old Fellow, which is not of necessity an irreverent expression, or at least not a disrespectful one. Hayward, whose prose translation has the great advantage of being done by a scholarly writer, who was at the time actually studying German, and wrote this book, so valuable to his countrymen, as an exercise, renders the speech of Mephistopheles thus:—“I like to see the Ancient One occasionally, and take care not to break with him. It is really civil in so great a Lord to speak so kindly with the Devil himself.” This is soon after the Lord has told him, “I have never hated the like of you.”

Now, we shall see that while Mephistopheles is given as a companion to Faust, to stir and work and be doing, to guide him quietly a particular way, and to keep him from going to sleep, he has no authority whatever to tyrannise over him. Indeed, he would be acting in violation of the terms, and would imperil his wager if he did so. The mediæval myth, which so fastened upon Goethe in his youth and strengthened its hold to the end of his long life, had assigned a lower office than companionship to Mephistopheles. He was to be Faust’s servant, in the menial sense, and it would have been “as much as his place was worth” to bully and threaten him. May I venture to remind my readers, for it has somewhat surprised me, in these latter days of theatrical criticism, to find the point much missed, that Mephistopheles is not only a slave, but a deformed slave, or, at least, a cripple, as rightly represented—to the perplexity, I am told, of some literary gentlemen!—by Mr. Henry Irving. Too much tribute, as I take it, is paid, nowaday, to the intellect of Mephistopheles on the stage; as, indeed, too much tribute is paid to intellect generally in the world. “Shall I boo down,” says Sandy Mackay, the bookseller, in Kingsley’s Chartist novel, “to a bit o’ brain more than to a stock or a stane?” I wish, sometimes, that we all had the rebellious spirit of Sandy. Especially is this desirable when the bit o’ brain is a bit of infernally bad brain. We admire the power of intellect; we cannot help admiring it, for all power is admirable, and the intellectual villains of Shakespeare, so eloquently glorified by Hazlitt, are just claimants on the purest and most liberal admiration. But we are often to blame for so persistently ignoring the defects, or failing to despise them with honest warmth. Mephisto denies. Why? Because he is intellectual? Not so; not quite so. But, rather, because his intellect is monstrous and mis-shapen; because his vision is distorted,

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and he sees truth as deceit, nobleness as villainy, purity as grossness. Irony has served the divinest ends. The most sacred language, ending to all good, in the stern denunciation of all evil, has often been signally ironical. M. Rénan, if my memory at this moment does not play me false, has affirmed and exemplified the proposition, in a quotation of the Divine Man. But the irony of Mephistopheles is essentially false. Sneers and jeers go awry in grotesque determination that black shall be white and filth virtue. I wonder that some Coleridge or De Quincey, or lesser light of critical rhetoric has not devoted a whole reflective essay to the Lameness of Mephistopheles. There is something indefinably terrible in the super-position of a human infirmity on the diabolic nature. Surely, it should help us to a hint that the spirit of Denial is crippled and infirm; that where the free power to believe, the rational will to worship, are absent or defective, there is weakness, not strength. "The Devil is an Ass," or his intellect is unsound, and goes hobbling pitifully on a club-foot.

As for the intellect of Mephistopheles, as the intellect of Iachimo, of Edmund the Bastard, of Richard the Third, and of Iago, the intellect of a noble nature is best shown in frankly admiring its strength while strongly resisting its fascination. Thackeray, in reference to a cruelly intellectual sneer, frequently quoted from Iago's finishing touch to his mock-ideal portrait of a beatified woman, finely adds, "But remember, it was a villain who spoke the words." Iago, one of Mr. Irving's finest parts—I will say for myself the very finest I have seen him play till the other evening—is, with the little difference of mortal birth, a counterpart of Mephistopheles, whom the old fabulists made lame in order to give him an accidental touch of humanity. By making Iago void of natural compunction—"O damned Iago! O inhuman dog!" cries poor Roderigo, stabbed in the dark and in cold blood—an approximation of the two characters is gained. Human in the vilest sense is the limping fiend; fiendish, that is to say inhuman, is the traitor and villain. Both are curiously alike in their amused contemplation of female innocence. The "bless'd condition" of Desdemona is, for Iago, a "bless'd fig's-end"; love he deems a mere lust of the blood, and a permission of the will. Virtue? Faugh! the wine she drinks is made of grapes. So does Mephistopheles regard Margaret. After telling Faust "it is an innocent little thing that went to the confessional for next to nothing," and that he has no power over her, he promises he will minister without delay to Faust's passion; places a heavy casket in Margaret's way, and slightly says he had put baubles in it to catch another, but they are all alike; children are children, and play is play, all the world over.

For the sake of effect, and to give Mr. Irving some splendid opportunities, of which he avails himself to show a declamatory power that fairly takes the audience by storm, the relative positions of master and vassal are reversed. Mr. Wills, the Colley Cibber of Goethe's play, has flung to the winds all the allegiance that should be owing to

Goethe, where allegiance would have spoiled a telling situation. The forcible-feeble idea of making Faust desirous of wedding Margaret is the most glaring English excrescence on the work. But when once it was deemed necessary to present Faust as the enslaved captive of Mephistopheles, and Mephistopheles as the incensed tyrannic lord of the very man he was pledged by the terms of a wager to guide quietly—to tempt, that is—we must be prepared for anything. Goethe has made the way plain for the temptation. His Faust, desirous of taking thirty years off his life, bids Mephistopheles find him an elixir, and the companions resort to the witches' kitchen. Here Faust turns against the vile mess of cookery in the chaldron, and asks if there is no other balsam, no natural mode of renewing youth. There is, Mephistopheles replies, but it is in another book and in another chapter. Faust must betake himself to hard peasant-occupation, begin to hack and dig in the field, confine himself and his sense within a narrow circle, support himself on simple food, live with beasts as a beast, and so keep young to eighty. Of course Faust refuses the alternative, and sorcery is the one thing left after all. He drinks of the liquor prepared for him by the Witch, and Mephistopheles hugs himself to think that with this draught in his body, Faust will see a Helen in every woman he meets. Henceforth the task of Mephistopheles is easy. There is no need for domineering on his part, or puling about marriage on the other.

If the Lyceum play, the most notable production, on the whole, that the modern stage has seen, is really to induce a wider and more studious acquaintance with the original work, it is vain to blink the differences which will inevitably come out at the first crush of comparative criticism. Whether the ingenious adaptor stands excused or not for changes which, though at open variance with the poet's meaning, are highly effective in themselves, give scope for acting such as the warmest admirers of Mr. Irving recognise as a new manifestation of his art, and are overlooked in the movement of the play, is another question—one into which I do not care, and am in no way called upon, to enter now. But there is one consideration which in fairness I feel bound to keep before me. Shakespeare wrote designedly for the stage, and all adaptations or material alterations of his plays are therefore to be regarded as the work of more or lessable but equally presumptuous meddlers. Goethe, on the other hand, could have had no expectation of seeing his great dramatic poem presented unchanged as an actual drama. The many shapes in which it has been brought upon the stage have all varied from one another as much, perhaps, as this latest and most carefully elaborated version varies in comparison with the original. Every German company, almost every German actor of eminence entitling him to the deference of managers, has had a special and peculiar acting-copy. Mr. H. Schütz Wilson, whose valuable essay on "Faust," one of his most instructive "Studies in History, Legend, and Literature," is now much before the reading public has found no room for analysing and comparing the several

stage editions he must have seen in representation by German as well as English and other European actors. My own experience comes far short of his. Devrient, Charles Kean, and an obscure French provincial actor, whose name I can hardly say I forget, never having remembered it even for a day, are the only Mephistos within my personal ken, except, of course, in opera. But I have a suspicion that one patent and absurd anomaly is common to all the stage versions of "Faust," though it struck me more in the Lyceum version than it ever did previously. This may have been, and I think it was, by force of the very perfection of acting which so emphasised the contradiction. Mephistopheles has received, by the conditions of his wager in Heaven, an implied dispensation from the pains and penalties of contact with all forms of holiness. He could not otherwise have entered a church and been present during mass. Yet he shudders and stops his ears at the sound of consecrated bells, can only crouch and slink past the image of the Virgin, and retreats like a beaten hound from Gretchen's crucifix. This is all very effective in representation, but like doubtful wine, it effects the head next day, especially when the head is a thinking head, and recalls a faint over-night suspicion of blending, or other indirection in the liquor. Mephistopheles cowed by a rosary, or a peal of bells! Why, he had entered heaven itself, undaunted and unrebuked!

Of the acting at the Lyceum, which has received its due from more practised critics, I had not purposed to say anything here. I might, indeed, have spoken more at length of the pictures which our "poet manager," as Mr. Irving has been aptly called, sets with practical poetry—and when is true poetry not practical?—upon the stage. It must suffice, however, to deal in generalities regarding the scenery, which cannot be praised in any just proportion to its merits, for the simple reason that its perfection is carried to a minuteness of accurate detail which transcends the power and means of adequate observation. May-day Night on the Hartz Mountains is celebrated with a weirdness and terror, at once vague and vivid, which approach as nearly the oppressive delirium of nightmare as any lover of the supernatural could wish. Shelley, who had a childish longing to see a ghost, and actually sought for apparitions in gaunt, worm-eaten old corridors, could not have conceived any such realisation of his morbid yearning as this wonderful scene. The poet of metaphysics, who had translated Goethe's episode, as well as the Prologue in Heaven, found nothing, it is true, precisely accordant with the scenic awe of the wild witch-festival as here presented. The original scene in the district of Schirke and Elend is another, and, perhaps, the most conspicuous example of thoroughly dramatic and as thoroughly unrepresentable action in the mighty poem. Round the Brocken or Blocksberg, the highest summit of the Hartz chain, converge all the wildest of the German superstitions. As Olympus was to the Greeks, as Sinai to the Jews, as Montserrat to the Spaniards, as the Himalaya Mountains to the tribes of India, so is the Blocksberg to the Germans. All the

grim levities of Teutonic genius, even satire and ridicule, mount up to this airy height. One of the many personages necessarily eliminated from the Lyceum picture is Procktopphantasmist, under which name Goethe satirised the Arch-Philistine, Nicolai, of Berlin, the cold prosaic severity of whose criticisms made him obnoxious alike to Fichte, Wieland, Herder, and Lavater, while his offence to Goethe was doubled and trebled by a not very brilliant parody on "The Sorrows of Werther," which was entitled "The Joys of Werther." Instead of showing any mortification at the time, Goethe good-humouredly continued the joke by capping the parodist's rather bald climax, and making fun of his fun. But Goethe nursed his vengeance ; and Procktopphantasmist, who appears in the witches' dance, and lectures the dancers on the glaring solecism of their steps, is the notable result. I have said it was not my purpose, like poor Procktopphantasmist, to criticise the acting in Mr. Irving's magnificent stage-study. Nor is it. I only bear my humble and willing testimony to the effect which that acting had upon me. Miss Terry, with those "tears in her voice," which often tremble with the sympathy of inspiration in her eyes also, could not but excel in a character so suitable to her pathos and her richness of simplicity. Of Mr. Irving I have already endeavoured to intimate, though I have come far short of expressing, my almost unqualified admiration. There cannot possibly, to my thinking, be a better Mephistopheles. For the love I bear Mrs. Stirling, whom I remember further back than she will believe—when, indeed, she played the village coquette, Gwynneth Vaughan, at the Olympic—I could wish, now, that Neighbour Martha were somewhat nearer that time of life into which, on the stage, Mrs. Stirling's order of characterisation has becomingly entered. Candidly, Martha is but of the middle-aged matronly state and period—fat, fair, and, say, forty. Mr. Conway's Faust pleased me more on the first night than his representation seems to have pleased everybody. The honest and legitimate success of Mr. George Alexander as Valentine is fair ground for such congratulation as, considering the smallness of the part, would appear impertinent if carried to the bounds of high praise. Yet the highest praise, I think, would not be too high. The presence of Mr. Howe, who wears the handsomest dress handsomely, and adds importance to every picture in which he figures, is the last note I have to make, though there is not a minor character that is inadequately sustained.

Though Goethe did not design his work for the stage, he never expressed any unwillingness that it should be adapted to the purpose of acting. The task was accomplished first by Tieck, whose version was produced simultaneously at Dresden and Leipzig, to celebrate Goethe's eightieth birthday. This was on August 28, 1829, and much literary discussion arose therefrom, Schlegel, in his Fifteenth Lecture, authoritatively settling the dispute by an *ex cathedra* decision that the poem was unfit for representation at all. Goethe himself made no sign ; but he had positively approved the use of his work

for musical composition, both by Prince Radzivil and Zelter. Coleridge criticised the poem as inconsistent, and as lacking causation and progression. The scenes he considered mere magic lantern pictures. Yet he at least took into consideration the possibility of connecting them as a dramatic whole.

GODFREY TURNER.

### "THE HARBOUR LIGHTS."

A new and original drama, in Five Acts, by GEO. R. SIMS and HENRY PETTITT.  
Produced at the Adelphi Theatre, on Wednesday, December 23, 1885.

David Kingsley	... ...	MR. WILLIAM TERRISS	Solomon	... ... ...	MR. E. TRAVERS.
Frank Morland	... ...	MR. PERCY LYNDAL.	Lieut. Wynyard, R.N.	... ...	MR. H. WYATT.
Nicholas Morland	... ...	MR. J. D. BEVERIDGE.	Dora Vane	... ...	MISS MILLWARD.
Capt. Nelson	... ...	MR. JOHN MACLEAN.	Lina Nelson	... ...	MISS MARY RORKE.
Capt. Hardy, R.N.	... ...	MR. HOWARD RUSSELL.	Mrs. Chudleigh	... ...	MRS. H. LEIGH.
Mark Helstone	... ...	MR. DUNCAN CAMPBELL.	Peggy Chudleigh	... ...	MISS KATE FAYNE.
Tom Dossiter	... ...	MR. E. W. GARDEN.	Mrs. Helstone	... ...	MISS MAUDE BRENNAN.
Jack Lirriper	... ...	MR. E. DGNALL.	Bridget Maloney	... ...	MRS. JOHN CARTER.
Will Drake	... ...	MR. T. FULLJAMES.	Polly	... ...	MISS J. ROGERS.
Dick Hockaday	... ...	MR. G. WENTWORTH.	Fisherwoman	... ...	MISS L NELSON.

This is decidedly one of the best and most effective plays that has been produced at the Adelphi in recent years. The story is interesting, and abounding in touches of human nature, both pathetic and humorous, while the construction is singularly neat and ingenious. The scene on the deck of H.M.S. Britannic is as lively and stirring a picture as need be, while the rescue of the heroine is as powerful a dramatic situation as any in modern melodrama. "The Harbour Lights," in fact, is all that an Adelphi melodrama should be—a strong, touching play, excellently placed on the stage, and admirably acted. The outline of the story is as follows:—The first act opens at Redcliffe-on-the-Sea, where lads and lasses, mothers, wives, and sweethearts are on the look-out for the boats which are hourly expected to bring ashore the crew of H.M.S. "Britannic." One of the girls who is looking out for her lover is Dora Vane, the adopted daughter of a retired officer, Captain Nelson. She and young Lieutenant Kingsley were boy and girl together, and the pair have been separated for two years. She is more than usually lonely to-day, for Lina Nelson, her sister in all but name, has been spirited away to London, ostensibly as a governess, but in reality she has been betrayed and deserted by the gay young squire, Frank Morland, a gambler and reckless spendthrift. Morland is on his last legs, he knows not where to turn for money, until, learning that Dora Vane is the heiress to twenty thousand pounds, he determines to marry her, and have her money by fair means or foul. His plans are, however, frustrated by the arrival of David Kingsley, who promptly comes to the point with Dora, proposes to her, and is accepted, so that when Frank Morland asks for her hand he finds himself late in the field, and his suit is consequently rejected. The second act takes us to the interior of Nelson's cottage, where Lina returns, determined to demand and obtain reparation from Squire Morland or to end her life, and for the latter purpose she secretes in her dress a loaded pistol. Her father has gone to London in search of her, and when Dora learns that Lina has gone to the Hall at night to endeavour to see Morland, she resolves to follow her. This falls out well with Morland's plans, for he

has contrived to send his servants away in the night in the hope of having, by means of an artfully-worded note, Dora Vane alone in the house with him. The second scene of this act takes place at the Hall, where Lina Nelson arrives, and, meeting with only hard words from the man who had wronged her, attempts to fire the pistol, but this attempt is frustrated by Morland, who snatches the weapon from her, and places it on a table by the window. Just at this moment Mark Helstone, a sea-faring man, who had gone to the bad through losing Lina Nelson, and had sworn to kill her seducer, is seen in the garden. The Squire forces Lina into a room, and Helstone enters and demands to know who was with him. Morland denies that it was Lina Nelson, and as Dora Vane arrives at that moment he says that she was the woman, and so Helstone is apparently satisfied at the explanation, and goes away, to return, however, and hide himself behind a curtain. A powerful scene then occurs between Morland and Dora, in which the former declares his passion for the girl, and avers that she shall not leave his house that night. Just in the nick of time Kingsley rushes in, saves Dora, and carries her off. Mark Helstone, who has then learned that Morland was Lina's betrayer, shoots him dead. One scoundrel being thus put out of the way, a prominent place is given to another, the late squire's cousin, Nicholas Morland, who hates Kingsley, and seeks to disgrace him. He causes a warrant to be issued for his arrest on the charge of murder—for it is known that Kingsley was at the Hall on the night of the crime—and, as he finds out that the murder was committed by Helstone, he bribes the unfortunate man to leave the country in order that there may be no evidence in Kingsley's favour. The warrant, however, does not arrive in time, for Lieutenant Kingsley has been suddenly ordered away with his ship on active service. Nevertheless, Nicholas Morland determines to hunt Kingsley down, so he pursues him to the deck of the "Britannic"—and there sneers at him for having married a woman whom he falsely says is dishonoured, and also makes the accusation of the murder. Kingsley, naturally maddened at such a charge, and at the idea of leaving his newly-married wife at the mercy of such a wretch as Morland, begs in vain for leave of absence, when, as the signal for clearing the ship of strangers is sounded, an order to a home appointment arrives, and he is free to stay on shore and protect his wife. In the fourth act we are shown the interior of Helstone's cottage, whither Mark has borne Lina after the terrible scene at the Hall, and where she has lain delirious for some hours, and has stated in her ravings that it was she who shot the Squire. Helstone's mother, enraged at the wreck which the girl has made of her son's life, informs the police that Lina is the murderer. Helstone hears of this, and endeavours to take Lina away, but Kingsley appears and prevents this. Then occurs the great scene of the play. Lina, in endeavouring to escape, has fallen from an under-path of the cliff on to the rock below, and is in imminent danger of being washed away. Kingsley determines to save her, and descends the cliff. We see him at the commencement of his perilous descent, and then, by a clever mechanical change, we see him descending to the rocks, and ultimately reaching Lina. But more troubles are in

store for Kingsley and Lina, as the tide is rapidly rising, and there appears to be no hope of their being saved, when up comes the lifeboat, and a very powerful and effective scene is brought to a capital climax. The last act, of course, is devoted to clearing the charge against Kingsley and his wife, while the villain, Morland, is proved to have been an accessory after the fact to the murder of his cousin, and the drama ends in honest fashion with virtue rewarded and villainy properly punished.

There never was a better hero for this kind of play than Mr. Terriss, who looks the handsome young lieutenant to the life, and is always active, easy, and vigorous. The two heroines are agreeably impersonated by Miss Mary Rorke and Miss Millward, while Mr. J. D. Beveridge smiles as complacently as ever through his part as first villain. A hit is made by a new comer to the Adelphi, Mr. Percy Lyndal, who acts the scene between Frank Morland and Lina Nelson at the Hall with warmth and extreme naturalness, uncommon qualities in a young actor. That excellent comedian, Mr. E. W. Garden, has a congenial part, and Miss Kate Fayne makes a merry soubrette.

### "LITTLE JACK SHEPPARD."

A new three-act "burlesque-operatic-melodrama," by H. P. STEPHENS and W. YARDLEY.  
Produced at the Gaiety Theatre on Saturday, December 26, 1885.

Jack Sheppard .....	MISS E. FARREN	Marvel .....	MISS RAINES
James Darrell .....	MISS WADMAN	Ireton .....	MISS ROBINA
Blueskin .....	MR. DAVID JAMES	Quilt Arnold .....	MISS HANDLEY
Jonathan Wild .....	MR. FRED. LESLIE	Little Gog .....	MISS PEARCE
Sir Rowland Trenchard .....	MR. ODELL	Little Magee .....	MISS TYLER
Abraham Mendez .....	MR. F. WOOD	Mrs. Sheppard .....	MISS HARRIET COVENEY
Mr. Kneebone .....	MR. W. WARDE	Winifred Wood .....	MISS MARION HOOD
Mr. Wood .....	MR. GUISE	Edgworth Bess .....	MISS BESSIE SANSEN
Captain Cuff .....	MISS EMILY DUNCAN	Polly Stannmore .....	MISS SYLVIA GREY
Shotbolt .....	MISS ROSS	Kitty Kettleby .....	MISS EUNICE

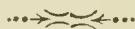
There are, doubtless, people who like to take their burlesque in smaller doses than those administered at the Gaiety Theatre, but if we are to have a three-ounce mixture instead of a draught, there can be no question of the exhilarating and stimulating qualities of that prescribed by those skilful practitioners, Messrs. Stephens and Yardley. To abandon medical metaphor it must be said that the new three-act "Burlesque-operatic-melodrama" (what will a play be called next?) is a very bright and amusing production, a welcome return to the best traditions of the Gaiety Theatre. It is well constructed, and the songs are particularly good, while the puns would have driven Dr. Johnson out of his mind. We know that the great man had a "general aversion to puns," possibly because the only one he is recorded to have made was, perhaps, the worst ever perpetrated, but the authors may shelter themselves behind Boswell's remark that "a good pun may be admitted among the smaller excellencies of lively conversation." Had he lived to see burlesques he would have added that puns were as *sauce piquante* to such productions. Very ingenious, too, is what may be called the scenic travesty of popular melodrama. Here, we have the escape of Jack Sheppard and Blueskin from prison, conducted much after the fashion of an Adelphi play with quick changes of scenery and all the elements of sensation, reproduced after a true burlesque fashion.

There is no need to tell in detail how far Messrs. Stephens and Yardley have followed the traditional story of Jack Sheppard. Suffice it to say that we see the adventurous hero making love, and accompanied by the faithful Blueskin rescuing Thames Darrell from the clutches of Mr. Jonathan Oscar Wild and Sir Rowland Trenchard. We find him at one time assisting at a "free-and-easy," over which Blueskin presides, and then imprisoned in Newgate, where he conducts himself in his usual dare-devil manner, and, of course, escapes in the fashion above indicated, the burlesque ending with his happy marriage. The first act is particularly bright and pretty, the second drags a little, and compression will doubtless improve it, while the third also needs a little judicious putting together. The burlesque, however, now plays closer than it did on the first night, and is a really capital piece of extravagance. The cast is the best that has been seen in burlesque for many years. To take the ladies first, rapturous cheers welcomed Miss Farren back to the scene of her old triumphs, and the brightest burlesque actress on the stage of to-day never played with more spirit. Her principal song, "Jack's alive, 'O,'" a very characteristic ditty, with a capital melody by Mr. Meyer Lütz, won an enthusiastic encore. Miss Marion Hood looked charming, and sang with infinite taste and feeling, her best contribution being a pretty song by Florian Pascal, "They call me the Belle of Dollis Hill." Miss Wadman's singing is also far above the average of that usually heard in burlesque, and she gave "There once was a time, my darling," admirably set by Mr. Alfred Cellier, with excellent effect. These two ladies were also heard to much advantage in a fanciful and charming duet, by Mr. Hamilton Clarke, entitled, "A Fairy Tale." Time stands still with Miss Harriet Coveney, who grows younger, instead of older, each year, and she acted with much humour and vivacity. Misses Emily Duncan, Sansen, Eunice, and Sylvia Grey had little to do but look pretty, and accomplished that task without effort, the latter lady also dancing remarkably well. Mr. David James, after ten years of comedy, returns in this piece to his first love, burlesque, and is a very humorous Blueskin, giving us a genuine character sketch, and his singing of the old song, "Farewell to Old England," was received with uproarious applause. Mr. Fred Leslie is an artist, and his conception of Jonathan Wild is grotesque and comic in the extreme. Two bits of business, his cooling himself with a pinch of theatrical snow scattered over him, from a snuffbox, and his cracking his fingers in a perfectly appalling fashion, caused much mirth among the audience. A funny "Polyglot Duet," by Mr. Meyer Lütz, sung with Miss Farren, was loudly encored. Mr. O'lell, capitally made up, was a highly effective representative of Sir Rowland Trenchard, and minor parts were well filled.

Besides the composers mentioned, Messrs. Corney Grain, Arthur Cecil, Michael Watson, and H. T. Leslie have supplied original music, and the songs and concerted pieces are throughout bright and tuneful. The dresses, designed by Mr. Chasemore, are the most artistic that have been seen in burlesque for some time, and the scenery must also be commended. The chorus consisted of shapely young ladies, who had been well drilled—I believe, under the eagle eye of Mr. R. Barker—and the piece

had evidently been properly rehearsed. Encores and applause were the order of the day, and all the principals were recalled at the fall of the curtain, a similar compliment being paid to the authors. This notice may possibly seem unduly laudatory to those who do not like three-act burlesques, and, personally, I had much rather see them in one myself. But, if such pieces are to be written at all, they are worth writing well, and it is because Messrs. Stephens and Yardley have here shown themselves masters of this particular form of stage-craft, that I am heartily glad to be able to indulge in what Mr. Swinburne calls "the noble pleasure of praising."

H. SAVILE CLARKE.



## Our Omnibus=Box.

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Several circumstances combined to make the dramatic year which has just passed away a period of anxiety to the managerial mind. Depression in trade means eventually a paralysis of amusement. When "times are bad" and dividends are low there must inevitably be a scarcity of money, and paterfamilias, whose balance at the bank is getting low, must think twice or thrice before be encounters without distrust the formidable expense of an evening at the play. However much people may differ in opinion as to the character and value of modern theatrical entertainments as compared with the old, one thing is quite certain, and that is they are not so reasonable. A half-guinea stall may be justified when some extraordinary star is announced, when the management has been put to some inordinate expense, or when there is a rush to see some particular play; but it is an open question whether for the majority of entertainments given nowadays in London it would not be more judicious to charge lower prices, and secure in the long run better houses. In the old days, no doubt, a visit to the play was an event in the domestic circle. The dinner hour was earlier than it is now, but for all that the routine of daily life was cheerfully disturbed for the sake of the intending playgoer. Clubs were not so numerous, and a chop in the city was a delightful prelude to the play, followed by a supper afterwards at some recognised theatrical tavern. We do not dispute the existence of the same kind of enthusiasm at the present day. Dinner hours are still disturbed and domestic arrangements altered at the will and command of theatrical enthusiasts; but, as a rule, unless the popularity of a new play is something phenomenal, and it becomes a duty to society to see that which is everywhere discussed, the manager has more frequently to yield to the public than the public bend to the manager, for the modern playgoer is a luxurious person. He must dine, and dine well, before he visits the play-house; he must dress, and dress well, when he is seen there; all of which luxuries entail considerable expense, so that it may be roughly calculated one might visit half-a-dozen plays in the

old times for the expense detailed by one night's theatre-going as matters stand at the present time. In some quarters it is maintained, and stoutly maintained, that the success of outdoor amusements in the summer season, particularly the beautiful garden at South Kensington, where music and smoking are pleasantly combined, have a serious effect upon the receipts of the London theatres. But we believe such theories to be pushed too far, and to be on the whole exaggerated. It should never be forgotten that the valuable exhibition at South Kensington brings foreigners and provincial visitors to town. Country cousins are not at South Kensington every night. They do wonders, no doubt, in a very short space of time. They are in Westminster Abbey at one minute and the Tower the next. They rush from Trafalgar Square to Bethnal Green. As a rule, they see more in a week than a Londoner does in a year. But, for all that, they are not likely to leave London—Healtheries and Inventories apart—with taking home some account of the play of the hour. Who would dare go back to the provinces and boldly own that he had never seen "The Private Secretary"? What young lady would dare face society at the rectory or the hall who was not familiar with "The Mikado"? The hottest weather and the fiercest opposition never keep people away from plays they, to use a common phrase, "are bound to see."

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But the dramatic year, whose life is just over, suffered from one exceptional difficulty more grave than any of these. We have only just got through a stormy period of political and electioneering excitement. An election that is positively disastrous in its effects on the exchequer of provincial theatres is at the same time pretty severely felt in London also. People cannot be in two places at once, and if they are applauding or hissing the rival candidates in the district school-room they cannot possibly be laughing with Mr. Toole or Mr. Wyndham in another. The year opened without much promise, but it has ended in what looks like a pleasant reaction. Mr. Henry Irving, with the Lyceum company, was away at the beginning of the year, terminating his second successful season in America. Before the summer was over London had lost the valuable managerial services, experience, and influence of Mr. and Mrs. Bancroft, who, without positively declaring they intended retiring from the stage, definitely gave up the care of the Haymarket Theatre to other hands, and withdrew their names, after a long and interesting career, from the list of London managers. We have repeatedly urged that the most successful theatrical manager is one who does not dictate to the public the kind of entertainment, but carefully gauges public taste and opinion. He must watch by the straw the way the wind blows, and must remember that the dramatic breezes are uncommonly shifty. At one time realistic plays are the rage; then they have to yield in turn to romantic drama. Farcical comedies go down at one time; whilst at another the fickle public will have nothing but opera bouffe and burlesque. The astonishing circumstance is that the spread of edu-

cation has as yet made no perceptible difference in the general character of our dramatic entertainments. They are neither healthier nor better as a rule than they used to be. The stage has not gained in dignity, refinement, or culture since the passing of the Education Act, or since the fever for higher education has spread in the middle classes. In fact, it might, without much rashness, be argued that the tendency is wholly in the other direction. It may be that the cheapness of literature, the easy access to good books, and the improved character of modern journalism have checked the educating influence of the stage. The practical man will urge that there is no need for him to pay to listen to that which he can buy to read at a much cheaper figure. But certain it is that the last thing the average playgoer wants to do when he goes to the play is to think or even be induced to think. He wants to be amused and only amused. He desires to laugh and not to cry. He maintains that the world is sad enough outside the theatre, and human nature sufficiently cruel in all our daily walks of life without contemplating them anew at the extravagant cost of ten shillings a stall. It is a practical not a sentimental age. Thus it is that panoramic plays, combinations of scenic and pictorial effects, mechanical changes and so-called realistic views of popular places, share the public ear with rough-and-tumble farces and ill-disguised pantomime that are received with shrieks of delight. The staid and decorous Court Theatre, that for years attracted the public by homely pictures of English life or modern manner, and with plays where occasional pathetic touches gave relief to a stream of comedy, has now gone over to rattling and rollicking farce. Mr. Pinero, weary in his endeavour to get the "scent of the hay over the footlights," has given his ready and clever pen to the lovers of farcical extravagance. Mr. John Clayton suffers no more as a misunderstood man, but reddens his nose and rends his garments in the service of hilarity; whilst the spruce and dapper Arthur Cecil is no more the elderly beau or fastidious old rake of modern comedy, but a dishevelled and torn old gentleman who gets under the table at a restaurant, and takes his seat on the bench, broken and bleeding, as a London magistrate.

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The efforts to check the tide of boisterous humour have not, so far, been successful. Shakespeare was found out of place at the St. James's Theatre, and did not repay the cost of outlay; whilst the experiment of magnificently producing a classical play by the late Lord Lytton at the Princess's Theatre was so disastrous that Mr. Wilson Barrett, without a moment's hesitation, reverted to melodrama of a homely pattern, and discovered that yeomen farmers who go to the dogs and take flying leaps over the Thames Embankment are more appreciated than Roman consuls in white togas and silver hair. We do not for one moment mean to imply that there is not a public ever ready to accept and encourage what is exceptionally fine or stirring. No genius has ever yet been denied a hearing in London. No grand or noble example of acting has been passed or unrecog-

nised. It does not matter whether it comes from countryman or stranger, from foreigner or kinsman, good acting and good plays are ever welcome. A Jefferson or Salvini, a Bernhardt or a Hading, will always command attention and respect. What is worth seeing is always seen in this country. But what the public will not stand is *aurea mediocritas*. They will have the best of everything, not the second best. How to get the best is the puzzling problem for the modern manager; how to encourage the best ever to come to the front is his constant anxiety. The last vestige of a school of acting has apparently departed for ever. There are no stock companies in the country, and London is feeding on its own supply. London, indeed, is the only school where actors and actresses can learn their business, and the consequence is that they are tried and found wanting before they are out of their leading-strings. The country is crowded with plays that have made a success in London, and they are performed by players who parrot every tone, gesture, and bit of business invented at the original production. They are not engaged to create but to imitate; they must not think for themselves, but must copy—and slavishly copy—their predecessors in the part. Under such circumstances, how difficult it must be to discover anything like original talent. The London stage is recruited from amateur clubs and the ranks of stage-struck society; the provincial is deluged with professional copyists. It becomes a serious question when we see such an unusual dearth of rising talent, and authors must tremble for their prospective work when heroines, young, pretty, intelligent, and powerful, are so extremely difficult to obtain. The loss is not so seriously felt now as it may be in the future. It does not require stupendous intellect or abnormal power to upset chairs and tables in a farcical comedy, or to jig in a burlesque. But if ever the day comes when there is a cry for the poetic drama or old English comedy the demand for good actors and actresses will be far greater than the supply. The lower and subordinate ranks of the profession were never so well and intelligently filled as now. Let us hope that a bright star will one day shine forth from these insignificant clusters of constellations.

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Amongst the more striking likenesses of "Men of the Time" displayed at the colossal sing-song to which the Society of British Artists invited *tout Londres* on the evening of the 12th ult. was an admirable portrait of Sir George Macfarren, the gifted and amiable Principal of the Royal Academy of Music, painted by Mrs. Goodman, whose manipulation of the brush exhibits no symptoms of failing power, although half a century has passed away since her canvasses first obtained favourable public notice. Nearly that long interval of time has elapsed since Mrs. Goodman executed a fine "counterfeit presentment" of the musical Earl of Westmoreland, who was then President of the Hanover Square Institution, in the council-room of which the work in question may still be seen. Sir George Macfarren's portrait is a half-length, representing the

veteran musician in the ordinary morning dress of the present day. It reproduces his thoughtful, somewhat sad expression of countenance with extraordinary truthfulness, and is, indeed, in every respect a remarkable picture. Its proper place, obviously, would be within the walls of the Institution in connection with which Sir George Macfarren has done such invaluable service to the cause of musical art in this metropolis.

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I have just read, with intense interest and pleasure, a book recently published by Messrs. Cassell, entitled "King Solomon's Mines." It is certainly one of the most fascinating volumes that has been recently issued from the press of this popular firm. So absorbing, indeed, is its interest, that the reader having perused the first chapter is impelled to devour every word of the three hundred and odd pages of which the book consists, at a single sitting. What appears at the outset to be a tale of travel, rapidly develops into a fairy story so well told, and abounding in so much human nature, that the reader is entranced as though by the perusal of a thrilling narrative of actual experience. The style of the author, Mr. E. Rider Haggard, is simple, as befits such a story, and to the purpose. The book, moreover, contains pathetic and humorous touches drawn in a masterly manner. At one moment the proverbial lump swells in your throat, and at the next you are moved to immoderate merriment. "King Solomon's Mines," beautifully printed, and published at a price which places it within the easy reach of the public, should prove a popular present for boys, young and old alike.

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"Charity covers a multitude of sins," is an old adage, the truth of which has never been better shown than since amateur performances came into fashion. Such a play as "The Shaughraun" should never be attempted at St. George's Hall, where the resources of the scenery are limited, and some of the cloths painfully shabby; two of them, an Elizabethan interior, and a view of trees, have done such good and long service, that, as they have in no way been spoilt by the hand of the restorer, they might now rest peaceably in some museum of antiquities. Some of the sets, however, were remarkably good and pretty for the place; but the one change at sight was highly ludicrous. This attempt at the presentation of a drama, quite unsuited to amateurs, was made by the Owl Dramatic Society, on November 24; the object being to aid the building fund of the Great Northern Central Hospital. The Richmond Orchestral Society, who gave their services, played so painfully out of tune, as to call forth laughter from the good-natured part of the audience, and hisses from the less well-disposed. The play dragged fearfully, most of the performers speaking in a monotonous and low key; the lady who played Moya is perhaps unaware that it was impossible to hear a single word she said. Three of the performers alone deserve special mention—Mr. Sidney Barrett, whose conception of Harvey Duff was good but exaggerated, and the brogue assumed being at

times so strong that it was difficult to understand the words. As Captain Molineux, Mr. Arthur W. Hughes managed to be simple and natural in a part which is anything but the latter; remembering his excellent acting as Carker in "Heart's Delight" last year, I am glad to be able to keep my good opinion of him. The evident reason why "The Shaughraun" was selected by the Owls was, no doubt, that the title *rôle* suited Mr. Frank Hole to the life; unfortunately, the Star system is even a greater mistake with amateurs than with professionals. With the exception that his brogue did not seem to hail from the Emerald Isle, I have nothing but praise to give to Mr. Frank Hole's impersonation: it was so full of spirits and genuine fun, earnest and unexaggerated, that it saved the day from an otherwise very dull performance.

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The performance of "Twelfth Night," given by the Irving A.D.C. on November 26, on behalf of the Wimbledon Art College for Ladies, had many good points; it only needed a little more rehearsing, and no doubt the second performance, announced for the 5th of December, was excellent. The small, but most difficult part of Orsino, was safe in the hands of Mr. B. Webster, who portrayed the love-sick Duke with discretion and earnestness; but I did not understand the necessity of the dark make up; there are plenty of fair southerners, and the black wig was decidedly unbecoming to Mr. Webster. I should not mention this detail were it not that I think Mr. W. Terriss's dark locks may have something to do with the matter, and I always condemn imitation of this kind. Mr. F. H. Macey would have been a very good Sir Toby had he known his lines; amateurs ought to remember that to be letter perfect is the A B C of acting, they should know all their words at the first rehearsal, so as to give all their mind to the proper interpretation, without being preoccupied with an uncertainty as to what comes next. Mr. H. Marsh brought out the foolish side of Sir Andrew Aguecheek's character very well but the vanity of the man was hardly marked enough. The clown of Mr. F. Sherbrook was excellent, and his song "O Mistress Mine" very well sung, the one in the last act was not so good for the reason that it was in too high a key for his voice. Mr. H. D. Shepard was very good as Malvolio, his "smiling" on Olivia was a little overdone, but this is the only exception I can take to an excellent impersonation, the last scene of all, after he is restored to liberty, was remarkably good. The Sebastian of Miss Muriel Levita was rather tame, her acting, walk, and gesture wanted breadth. Unnecessary "Gag" is the worst of habits, but it is better to do anything than to stop short looking helpless. The scene of the duel between Sebastian and Sir Andrew was entirely spoilt by Olivia not coming on at the proper time; Sebastian, who had struck a very bold attitude, had with this exhausted her knowledge of fencing, and when a voice from the wing called out "go on," the young lady audibly answered, "I can't,"

and looked very unhappy, an awkward pause ensuing; any business, whether real fencing or not, would have been better than this. As for Mrs. Thomson, she had no excuse for not appearing at the right time. This lady is pretty, and dresses well, but I am sorry to have to repeat about her Olivia all I said of her Portia last year; expression of feature or byplay are ignored by her, and she delivers her lines in a monotonous fashion, infusing little or no meaning in them. Miss Annie Woodzelle was a spirited Maria, helping considerably to the success of the performance. Miss Taigi Kean, a very young lady, appeared as Viola, and was rather overweighted, but she gives good promise. She has a sympathetic face, a good voice, and a good idea of how blank verse should be spoken; if Viola is a little beyond her power at present, she is on the right road to become a good actress. The sweet expression of sudden timidity making one almost think one could perceive a blush upon her cheek, when Orsino first discovers that she is a woman, was one of those little touches which show a true instinct, it was natural, and it was right. The other members of the club rendered good service in the minor parts, and their excellent stage-manager, Mr. Charles Fry, received a deserved call. The performance took place at St. George's Hall.

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On November 28, the Glow-Worms assembled at St. George's Hall to entertain their friends, who mustered in great numbers. The Farce "Done on both sides," gave opportunity for some very good acting, on the part of Mr. A. H. Beard as Brownjohn, Mr. Geo. Knight as Phipps, and Miss Knewstub as Mrs. Whiffles; this young lady was remarkably good, and so was her "make-up." Miss E. Hallett and Mr. H. J. Drinkwater were fair in the remaining parts, but the gentleman's memory was unsatisfactory. For some unaccountable reason the curtain did not come down soon enough, placing the performers in a rather awkward predicament; they did their best in filling up the time with some extra business, but it made the ending of the play rather confused. Pinero's comedy "The Money Spinner" came after; Miss Knewstub was again very good as Dolly. The Margot of Miss Strudwick was also a success, but her face was a failure, the black lines were only unmistakable streaks of paint, and not wrinkles. Miss Cooke is always painstaking and conscientious; her acting is natural enough, but she lacks insight into character. Her Millicent Baycott was rather colourless; one cannot take exception at what this lady did, but at her losing several opportunities of doing much both in expression and byplay. Mr. C. Carr was satisfactory as Harold Baycott, but rather too much given to looking up skywards. Mr. A. E. Drinkwater was an excellent Jules Faubert. The same might be said of Mr. Wm. Christie, if he had not been so uncertain of his words; his conception of Baron Croodle was capital. By the bye, I noticed that several times during the evening the prompter was not at his post when required. Mr.

H. Weeden Cooke, Jun., has never done anything better than his Lord Rengussie ; there is little or nothing to do in the first act, but in the second the part is all-important, and Mr. Cooke went through this with flying colours ; he was gentlemanly and natural, and showed a depth of true feeling that made one forget for the moment that he was acting, and which deserves the highest commendation. The Euterpean Amateur Orchestral Society, which numbers as many as six ladies in its ranks, gave a good selection of music very well rendered ; they do honour to their conductor, Lieut. Colonel H. A. Douglass.

Our Melbourne correspondent writes :—“There has been but little variety in theatrical matters during the past month. ‘The Private Secretary’ was finally played at the Theatre Royal on Oct. 9, and was then taken into the country. The Company are now on their way to Adelaide, where the comedy will be played at the Academy of Music. The evergreen “Struck Oil” was revived on Oct. 10, with Mr. J. C. Williamson and Miss Maggie Moore as John and Lizzie Stofel. This being our great racing carnival the Theatre Royal has been given over to a series of revivals, a different piece being played every night. Mr. Geo. Rignold failed to make ‘Adam Bede’ a success at the Opera House, and it made way on Oct. 17 for ‘Peep o’ Day.’ This, also, would not draw, so ‘The Lights o’ London’ was revived on the 24th, and crowded houses are the result. Mr. Rignold appears as Harold Armitage, Mr. T. B. Appleby as Jarvis, and Miss Roland Watts-Phillips as Bess. ‘Mixed’ enjoyed a successful six weeks’ run at the Bijou Theatre, and on Oct. 24 ‘Written in Sand’ and ‘Nita’s First’ were presented by the best comedy company that Australia can produce, the theatre having passed into the hands of Messrs. Garner, Williamson, and Musgrove. Miss Nina Boucicault and Mr. Dion G. Boucicault are members of this company. Mr. Pinero’s comedy, ‘The Magistrate,’ is announced for Saturday next. ‘Mixed’ has been removed to the Nugget Theatre, but the change of houses has not proved satisfactory. Emerson’s Minstrels are occupying St. George’s Hall, and the Federal Minstrels are at the Victoria Hall. Leon and Cashman’s Minstrels open at the Nugget Theatre next Saturday evening. The Theatre Royal, Sydney, has been given over to a series of revivals of the Gilbert and Sullivan operas, in which Miss Alice Barrett is appearing. Mr. Harry Rickards is singing at the Academy of Music in the same city, Mr. Geo. Darrell is playing his own drama, ‘The Naked Truth,’ at the Opera House, and Mr. Alfred Dampier is playing ‘Brought to Justice’ at the Gaiety Theatre. Mr. Wybert Reeve is appearing in ‘Impulse,’ at the Theatre Royal, Adelaide. Miss Genevieve Ward’s great performance of ‘Antigone,’ already mentioned by me, takes place in the Town Hall on Nov. 6. Close upon £3,500 have already been received for seats. Mr. Dion Boucicault and his young wife are playing in Dunedin, New Zealand. A leading daily published a telegram a few weeks ago which stated that Miss Agnes Robinson still claimed to be Mr. Boucicault’s wife, the divorce proceedings being incomplete. Mr.

Boucicault has written in reply that her claim to be considered his wife is 'farcical,' and that he has no wife but Miss Louise Horndyke. John F. Sheridan and the 'Fun on the Bristol' Company are resting in Sydney. Mr. G. A. Sala is lecturing in New Zealand. 'Nita's First' has achieved the special honour of the particular attention of our two most powerful dailies; and both have agreed that the comedy is too immoral for our stage. It has been drawing very poor houses during the past few days."

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The Carleton D.C. gave a performance in aid of the Great Northern Central Hospital, at St. George's Hall, December 12. In "A Rough Diamond" Miss Lillian Millward and Mr. A. E. Drinkwater as Margery and Cousin Joe, were very good and thoroughly at home in their parts. Mr. J. M. Powell surprised me, I could not have thought it possible for an usually excellent amateur to act so badly. The remaining three neither knew their parts nor had the slightest notion of acting. The play was unrehearsed, and, but for the two first-mentioned, a complete failure. "The Ladies' Battle" fared scarcely better. The action dragged fearfully, most of the performers spoke in undertone, and showed neither spirit nor briskness. Mrs. Conyers d'Arcy, in spite of some good acting, did not escape the general influence of dulness, and gave a rather heavy impersonation. I could not well understand why she wore a man's wig. Miss Gertrude Vindon as Léonie showed much earnestness and feeling, but was too brusque in manner, and now and then assumed a dignity of deportment unsuited to a child of sixteen ; the same may be said of her long-trained satin dress, with its profuse pearl trimmings. Mr. J. M. Powell was rather good in the second act, but not so in the first and last; lovers are not in his line. Mr. H. S. Carstairs and Mr. A. E. Drinkwater were mistaken in their conception of their respective characters. The former only showed the comic and foolish side of Grignon, who, despite his ridicule, is a good-hearted fellow, and earnestly in love. The latter was painfully slow and heavy as Montrichard ; and both seemed to forget that they were representing two gentlemen moving in the best society, and not a buffoon and a police-agent. The Euterpeans, undoubtedly one of the very best amateur orchestra, gave their services, and delighted everyone by their capital execution. A very pretty gavotte, "Euterpe," by their conductor, Lieut.-Colonel H. A. Douglas, gained an encore, which could not be accepted, as the curtain was about to rise.

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A correspondent sends the following notes from a Black Forest theatre :— "In the course of a few weeks spent at the old University town of Freiburg, in the Grand Duchy of Baden, the writer had many opportunities of studying the present German drama and opera as they are maintained by an efficient stock company, with occasional assistance from elsewhere. The first thing that strikes an Englishman on examining the programme for the week is the extraordinary amount of work which the company has to get through. Performances are given every Sunday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday, and occasionally on Wednesdays.

besides, there being usually two operas and two dramas given every week. In no case does one see a play insufficiently rehearsed, and the voice of the prompter is very rarely called into requisition. Small farces, when given, are rendered just as carefully as more important works, and the principals act in them, the result being that the whole performance is pleasing from end to end, and stamped throughout with the impress of care and thoroughness. The audience is always attentive, and should any hitch or untoward incident occur they greet it with a broad but good-humoured smile, which never degenerates into a laugh of ridicule. The strictest silence during the performance of a play is exacted, and no applause is given before the last notes of the accompaniment of a song. The gain in the last case is very considerable over the noise of hand-clapping, which immediately follows a song in England often before the last sung note has died away, and always before the end of the accompaniment. During the overture to an opera this silence is also insisted on, and here, too, the gain is very great. As soon as the play begins the gas of the chandelier is lowered so as to reduce the auditorium to a very deep twilight, which greatly enhances the brightness of the stage, and is also much pleasanter to the eyes than the glare of a French or English theatre. There is no more objectionable feature of the German stage than the way in which performers stop the action of a piece in order to acknowledge applause, and the indiscriminate manner in which wreaths and bouquets are thrown often at most inopportune moments. On the other hand, encores are seldom demanded, and still more rarely given. Though one often at the moment regrets this, yet it is a great question whether it be not better art to have none, as an encore very often hampers the continuous development of the plot.

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"Of the plays which have been lately performed here the most striking were 'The Death of Wallenstein' and 'Othello,' in both of which the company was strengthened by the assistance of Herr Ludwig Barnay, from the Saxe-Meinengen company, in the title *rôles*. His Wallenstein might have stepped out of a contemporary canvas, and was a most consistent and well sustained performance. In the part of Othello he seemed to be fatigued before the end of the play, but was most happy in some of his renderings of celebrated lines. With regard to the Smothering Scene, he follows the lead of Mr. Irving more nearly than that of Mr. Booth. Of comic plays 'Rosenkrantz and Güldenstein' and Niesel's 'Papageno' have been given with great success. The latter might suit the Criterion Company. With regard to operas, the company here show to far more advantage in the smaller works than in such great operas as 'The Hugenots,' 'Il Trovatore,' or 'Der Freischütz,' which require a large stage and fine scenery. In 'Fidelio,' 'Czar and Carpenter,' 'Mariage de Figaro,' 'Le Postillon de Lonjumeau,' and the perennial 'Beggar Student' they are at their best. In Flotow's 'Martha' and 'Indi' they are also seen to great advantage. The latter we must hope soon to see on the English stage. As yet there have been no absolute novelties given, but Nessler's 'Trompeter von Säckingen' is in rehearsal, and is

greatly looked forward to, the music of the celebrated ‘Yung Werner’s Abschieds Lied’ being heard everywhere. The music of the whole opera is said to be fully equal, if not superior, to that of the ‘Pied Piper of Hamlyn’ (‘Der Rattenfänger von Hamelu.’) That the German provincial stage, if such a word may be used, is far in advance of ours there is no doubt, but with the gradual but certain growth of English opera we may hope soon to silence for ever the imputation that England is an unmusical nation.”

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The favourable impression made last year by the Insurance Amateurs’ performance of “Plot and Passion,” was confirmed this year by their appearance in the “Two Roses” and “The First Night,” at St. George’s Hall, on December 15 last. Both pieces were excellently put on the stage, well stage-managed, and acted with spirit and “go”; the company being of great individual excellence, and playing together with surprising discipline. In the “Two Roses,” Mr. W. L. Hallward was most successful as Jack Wyatt, acting with admirable manliness and force. Mr. J. C. Carstairs was a very good Caleb Deecie. His appearance suited the part well, and, barring an occasional tendency to move about with greater facility than a blind man could, he acted the part consistently and cleverly. Mr. E. B. Morrison did not sink his own individuality sufficiently in playing the very difficult part of Digby Grant, and it was evident at many points that the character sat uneasily on him. But he acted always with intelligence, and made all his points tell. Our Mr. Jenkins was variable. Occasionally Mr. F. E. Lacy acted him with the requisite unction, but he seemed to relapse into periodical terror lest he should be too funny, and became ineffective. Mr. H. C. Rush’s Mr. Furnival was an admirable piece of acting; specially good was his relation of Caleb Deecie’s fortunes, in the third act. Ida and Lotty were charmingly played by Miss Fores-Brette and Miss Millie Holland, and Miss Schuberth was a good Mrs. Cups; but Mrs. Lenox Browne was only moderately good as Mrs. Jenkins. In “The First Night,” Mr. Albert J. Bovay played Achille Talma Dufard with really extraordinary ability. Few amateurs display such richness of humour, and such power of expression. Rose Dufard was prettily played by Madame Florence Grant, and the other parts were satisfactorily filled. But the singing was too dreadful! Both pieces were received with tremendous enthusiasm by a fairly good house.

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Miss Lydia Thompson, whose photograph appears in this number, made her first appearance on the stage on December 26, 1853, as Little Silverhair in the Christmas piece of that title produced at the Haymarket Theatre. In the following year she played Little Bo-Peep in the extravaganza of the same name brought out at the Haymarket. On November 16, 1859, she appeared at the St. James’s Theatre as Cygnetta in a fairy spectacle, entitled “The Swan and Edgar.” At the same theatre, the following year, in a “ballet-cum-burlesque,” entitled “My Name is Norval,” she played the part of Young.



" Let mirth go on ; let pleasure know no pause."

ROWE.

*Eddie Thompson*

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BARRAUD, 263, OXFORD STREET, W.



Norval. Monday, April 9, 1860, Miss Thompson appeared at the Lyceum Theatre in a burlesque, originally played by members of the Savage Club, for a charitable purpose, entitled "The Forty Thieves;" and subsequently, November 5, 1860, as Fanchette in "The Pets of the Parterre," written by Stirling Coyne. In 1861, August 19, in the first performance, at the same theatre, of Falconer's play, "Woman; or, Love against the World," she acted the character of Norah; and in an after-piece by the same author, entitled "The Fetches," the part of Mary Brady. But Miss Lydia Thompson will be best remembered as a sparkling and extremely clever actress in burlesque, in which she has not been excelled on the London stage. Perhaps her best hits have been made in "Der Freischutz," "The Field of the Cloth of Gold," "Blue-Beard," and "Robinson Crusoe." Miss Lydia Thompson, it may be added, has met with great success in the United States, where she is now accompanying her clever daughter, Miss Tilbury, who is on tour with Miss Mary Anderson.

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Mr. Augustus Harris's pantomime of "Aladdin," brought out at Drury Lane on December 26, is as brilliant a production as anything which this clever stage manager has yet done, and is likely to draw crowded houses for a long season. The "Dream of Fair Women," admirably designed by Mr. Alfred Thompson, is a pretty idea excellently executed, while children are sure to be delighted with the scene which represents the building of Aladdin's palace. Miss Grace Huntley is a pretty and pleasing representative of Aladdin. She sings sweetly and dances nimbly. Mr. Harry Nicholls is a quaint Widow Twankay, and his skit on Miss Kate Vaughan's dancing in "Excelsior" is a clever and harmless bit of caricature. While Old Drury is sure to be packed by lovers of modern pantomime, Mr. William Holland seeks to fill Covent Garden by means of the attraction of a circus on a large scale. The entertainment here provided is of the best possible kind, and should not be missed by those who care to witness dexterous riding, clever conjuring, and capital gymnastic exercises.



## At the Lyceum.

DECEMBER 19, 1885.

### MARGARET.

An old-world German maiden, frank of heart,  
 And certes, of exceeding loveliness,  
 Owning the Teuton blood in each fair tress.  
 What wonder that the frequent tear-drops start,  
 A tribute to the pathos of thine art :  
 We see thee fall a victim to the wiles  
 Of Faust, that fell seducer, who beguiles  
 So sweet a soul to play so ill a part.  
 We see thee at the altar, while the hymn  
 Of doom peals o'er thee ; with thee, too, alway  
 The Devil's whispers make thine eyes grow dim  
 With terror ; and the poor lips dare not pray.  
 Would that great Goethe's shade could rise and see  
 Once more his matchless Margaret in thee.

### MEPHISTOPHELES.

The Devil is a gentleman, 'tis said :  
 And so with gallant bearing, sword on hip,  
 And swift satiric smile upon the lip,  
 With gay cock-feather curling o'er thy head  
 Thou standest here this eve, in vivid red  
 Amid the Brocken phantoms : and anon,  
 Poor Gretchen falls, and peace and hope are gone  
 With Faust upon his evil errand sped.  
 Through all the weird enchantments of the night,  
 Thou flashest like the messenger of Fate ;  
 Till to the dungeon steals the morning light,  
 And the lost lover's rescue comes too late.  
 Had Goethe known thee he had said full fain,  
 "Here is the mocking Devil of my brain."

H. SAVILE CLARKE.



# THE THEATRE.



## The Lyceum Faust.

I.—COULD FAUST MARRY MARGARET?

By F. A. MARSHALL.

THERE are certain quasi-theological questions connected with Goethe's "Faust" that have been touched upon in some of the criticisms on the performance at the Lyceum Theatre about which, Mr. Editor, I should like, with your permission, to say a few words. Many of the critics have objected to the scene in which Faust threatened Mephistopheles to marry Margaret, and Mephistopheles in his turn threatened Faust with certain awful punishments if he dared so to do. Most of the objectors to this scene, while condemning it as inconsistent with both the characters of Faust and Mephistopheles, argued as if it was impossible that Faust, having sold himself to the devil, should marry Margaret. In fact, if these objectors were right, it came to this: that, as a consequence of his compact with the fiend, Faust had sacrificed entirely his free will. The question is, could he do so? I believe that he could not, consistently with the theology on which "Faust and Margaret" is based. It is not a question of what Goethe himself believed, or what Faust may have believed. It is a fact that the whole scheme of the poem assumes the truth of Christianity. It assumes the doctrine of the Redemption, of the divinity of our Lord, and, therefore, by implication, of an omnipotent God. It also assumes the theological doctrine of free will—that is to say, that it is in the power of every man, at any moment of his life, to do good or evil, or not to do good or evil, just as he chooses. We need not trouble ourselves here with the more complicated questions of demonology; whether such compacts as that signed by Faust are possible or impossible does not

affect the point at issue. Presuming him to have signed such a compact, he was *ipso facto* excommunicated, and in a state of mortal sin; but this could not prevent him, if he chose, from marrying Margaret, provided he could get any priest to perform the ceremony; nor, supposing him to have done so by an act of deceit—that is to say, by concealing from the priest the fact that he was in a state of mortal sin—it could not affect the validity of the sacrament, as far as Margaret was concerned. I maintain, therefore, that Faust was perfectly competent to marry Margaret if he chose, and that Mephistopheles could not prevent him doing so. As to the question of the propriety or impropriety of Faust's expressing a wish to do so, I am strongly of opinion that the interest of the drama would be much heightened were the struggles of Faust to escape from the infernal compact he had made brought into greater prominence. I notice that some critics, while insisting that this proposal of Faust to make Margaret an honest woman is ridiculous, &c., &c., also remark that, in the Lyceum version, there is no mistake as to Faust's eternal damnation; that he is not allowed (as Goethe has perhaps rather implied than stated) to go into Purgatory. It is quite clear that if, theologically speaking, Faust had any chance of going to Purgatory, he also had the power, at any moment, of repenting of his sin and annulling the compact. If we look at the matter from an equitable point of view, he would no doubt morally, if not legally, have broken his agreement with Mephistopheles by doing any good action that would save his soul. It would have been quite open to Mephistopheles, after having tried persuasion and then threats in vain, to have on his side put an end to the compact, and deprived Faust of the youth he had given him, for a consideration, as that consideration was not forthcoming. And here it may be noted that, in all the stories of demonology with which I am acquainted, and in the two most important instances in the Bible, in which the power of Satan is practically illustrated—namely, in the temptation of Job and the temptation of Our Lord—it is very clear that, while a large measure of supernatural power is given to the Evil One, some limit to that power is clearly and logically laid down; that is to say, the Devil is never allowed, by himself or through any of his agents, the gift of omnipotence; in no case has he the power to destroy a soul without that soul's consent.

With regard to the second point, namely, the inappropriateness—from a poetic and dramatic point of view—of Mephistopheles' outburst of rage, I cannot agree with the critics. It seems to me to introduce the one touch of humanity into the character of Mephistopheles, which is presumably, it may seem, a paradox to call an outburst of rage a touch of humanity—perhaps we should say of human nature—but the introduction of such a scene certainly gives the actor an opportunity which he much needs. Whatever may be said of the character of Mephistopheles, it does not offer much, if any, opportunity to a really great actor. The impassiveness to all human emotion and the rather commonplace cynicism of the part become monotonous after a little time. A comparatively inferior actor may succeed as Mephistopheles. His little jokes about hell, eternal damnation, and such like serious subjects are sure to get a laugh. There is nothing in the character—at least, as far as any dramatic version of the story is concerned, which calls for any great quality on the part of the actor. To compare such a bloodless shadow to Iago or Richard the Third is ridiculous.

The complaint against Mr. Wills and against Mr. Irving for daring to alter Goethe's poem appears to me very unreasonable. Goethe's great work is not a drama; in parts it is not even a dramatic poem; and, therefore, if it is to be represented on the stage, it must be modified and altered in such a manner as to make it fit for the stage. I know that Germans are said to be capable of sitting out a representation of both parts of "Faust," but even in Germany I believe it is the custom to omit considerable portions of the poem when represented on the stage. At any rate, I fear no English audience would be found to sit out a literal translation of Goethe's "Faust." To mutilate the text of such a poem, when publishing it, would be a crime; but I cannot see that either author or manager can be fairly blamed for introducing what alterations may seem to them to add to the dramatic effect of what only pretends to be an adaptation, and not a literal version, of Goethe's "Faust." Shakespeare wrote for the stage; and to alter materially his text, or to change the catastrophes of his plays when preparing them for stage representation is certainly an act of leze-majesty, but it is different with such works as Goethe's "Faust" or Byron's "Manfred."

I may add that, in Marlowe's tragedy, the struggle between the

good and the evil angels of Faustus continues throughout the play, and might, if treated with any dramatic power, have lent some semblance of interest to that dreary and tedious work. The threatening speech of Mephistopheles to Faust, with which so much fault was found by the critics, was very probably suggested by the following passage, which illustrates at the same time the fact that, according to Marlowe (who followed, in his turn, the old prose history of Dr. Faustus), the struggle on the part of Faustus to repent never ceases :—

FAUST.—Accursed Faustus ! Wretch, what hast thou done ?

I do repent ; and yet I do despair :

Hell strives with grace for conquest in my breast ;

What shall I do to shun the snares of death ?

MEPH.—Thou traitor, Faustus, I arrest thy soul

For disobedience to my sovereign lord :

*Revolt, or I'll in piece-meal tear thy flesh.*—QUARTO, 1616.

The last line is very similar to one of the lines in Mr. Wills's inserted speech.

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## II.—THE LAMENESS OF MEPHISTOPHELES.

BY GODFREY TURNER.

A SORT of challenge may seem to have been thrown out in a recent article of which I was the indifferent author. How is it that so temptingly obscure a subject as the lameness of Mephistopheles has piqued no critical essayist, no Hazlitt, Coleridge, De Quincey, or Charles Lamb, into a speculative disquisition ? Fearing lest my gage may remain unheeded, perhaps spurned, where it was thrown, I will even lift it myself, and try what so weak a hand may do to rescue a strangely neglected theme from nothingness. Now, I have already laid some stress on a proposition but too apt, as I think, to elude such argument as it deserves. In admiring the intellectuality of negation, we lose sight for a time—for too long a time in most cases—of its weakness. Denial cannot be the constant operation of mental power. The Mephistophelean intellect, exerted with the sole purpose to maintain an everlasting No, is a monstrously defective intellect, such as is wanting altogether in the reason that sees a step beyond its tangible reach ; that is capable of any positive effort to “confirm or shake or make a faith.”

To symbolise a preternatural intellect such as this, there was

one direct course for our simple forefathers to take ; and they took it. The figure which presented itself to their minds was a crippled figure. A fallen spirit, like a fallen body, must have sustained some hurt, and what hurt more likely than a broken limb ? Remember, too, that in a rougher age bodily infirmity was, oftener than it now is, a subject of derision. Remember Bacon's terrible words, uttered in the cold tone of a logical statement, regarding deformed persons whom he judged (quoting Scripture that nowise helped his argument) to be "void of natural affection!" It is really worth while to recall Bacon's own words here. "Whoever hath anything fixed in his person that doth induce contempt hath also a perpetual spur in himself to rescue and deliver himself from scorn ; therefore all deformed persons are extreme bold. First, as in their own defence, as being exposed to scorn, but in process of time by a general habit." This was a relic of mediævalism that lingered in the learned Elizabethan days, when courts and lordly dwellings had still their dwarfs, to mock or to pamper, as the princely mood might impel. A club-foot was only a few degrees less ridiculous than a crook-back, in those grim saturnine times. It is in a slighting or contemptuous tone, no doubt, that the sot in Auerbach's cellar, looking askance at Mephisto, asks why the fellow limps on one foot.

The name itself has been to many scholars a confusion and a mystery. By some etymologists it is thought to be derivable from a Semitic tongue, and this piece of guess-work is touched upon, without elucidation, in Goethe's correspondence with Zelter. By Widman it is said to be a Persian name. Enquiry should end with Shakespeare's spelling, "Mephastophilus," which occurs in "The Merry Wives of Windsor." Falstaff's gang, whom Slender has accused, collectively and individually, of theft, are blustering in their choice mock-heroic jargon, and Antient Pistol ludicrously addresses the poor bewildered Gloucestershire gentleman by that outlandish term, as one of objurgation, without knowing more about it than the incensed fish-fag knew when she was called first a rhomboid, and immediately afterwards an isosceles triangle. Or, if the Antient were conscious of any relevancy in the name, he may have applied it, as that of a weak-limbed character in a puppet-show, to the shamefully abused Master Abram. Indeed, a certain shambling awkwardness in the gait of this innocent is easily imaginable. "Mephastophilus," therefore, might have some

vague applicability, in addition to being a good, round mouthful of a word, calculated to overawe poor Slender, already much confused in his evidence against the three rogues who took him to a tavern, made him drunk, and afterwards picked his pocket. When called to account, they pile up all the bombastic and absurd epithets they can think of, till their accuser says: "Ay, you speake in Latin then too; but 'tis no matter."

Etymological inquiry, I repeat, should end with Shakespearian orthography. So long as the modern spelling of "Mephistopheles" is our blind guide, we may be led with Widman and the rest into all manner of vain imaginings. There is really no making anything out of "Mephistopheles." It is Greek to those who know not Greek, and it is no Greek to those who do. But if Antient Pistol, who mouthed many big and learned words, had but known the fact, he possessed an easy-fitting key to the puzzle. The word put into his mouth by Shakespeare is the right word, rightly spelt on the page that conjures up to us the interior of the Garter Inn, at Windsor, in the time of Henry the Fourth. "Mephophilus," the old spelling, tells the meaning of the name at once. Shakespeare's "less Greek" told him, with his fine "instinct of learning," that he had got hold of a piece of genuine orthography, and thence of genuine etymology. Me-phostophilus, if not actual Greek, is surely Greek enough to suggest *Not-light-loving*; and if it were possible to reinstate the mediæval formation of a name altered in later ages, and sanctified even in error by the genius of Goethe, we should be enabled to recognise by a most apposite name the Fiend of Darkness and the Enemy of Light.

The lameness of "Mephistopheles," in times when a powerful Church made its influence felt in many ways—not the least of which, by any means, was the stage—had a distinct value, as correcting and balancing such too respectful awe as the Tempter might otherwise have inspired in ignorant minds. "His wiles, his subtlety, his perseverance, his versatility, his modes and habits of action, his influence, his faculty of assuming and inspiring the idea of his attractiveness and his friendships towards his intended victims," all which powerful qualities and characteristics are forcibly summed up by an eminent churchman, writing in our own epoch, on the nature and veritable existence of the Fiend, "not as a principle but as a person," almost demanded on the part of a dogmatic priesthood some encouragement to resistance

that should be easily "understood by the people." Hence, I have ventured to suppose, sprang the simple idea of the crippled foot. Giles and Hodge would not fail to see, in the miracle-play, that the crafty and seductive Mephisto was after all little better—that is stronger—than lame Tom, the village butt, for whom all the strong lads, who could run and jump and wrestle, had the supreme contempt which is the inalienable right of muscle over mere brain. Intellect, and an active set of limbs together, would, to be sure, have Giles and Hodge at a very decided advantage; but to their bucolic minds a being incapable of jumping a five-barred gate can hardly be accounted clever. Of all the gods, Vulcan must have been held in least esteem by the swains of ancient Greece. It was not so much that he had been kicked out of Heaven, but to have broken his leg in the fall was too ridiculous. A deity with a club-foot, and liable to be saluted by vulgar little Lemnians with the cry, "Hullo, there! Chalaipoda!" could hardly look for unqualified praise outside his own temple, if in it.

A lamer devil than Mephistopheles is the *esprit folle*, the ridiculer rather than the scoffer and denier, the patron of mankind's vices without much regard to their crimes, the teaser not the tormentor, the playful disturber of society, seeking not to overthrow it, malicious rather than malignant—Asmodeus. He is the "Diable Boiteux" of Le Sage, who would seem to have had some such fondness for him as Thackeray is thought to have had for Becky Sharp, so that at times the author's truthful hand, relenting, made the wicked creature almost amiable. I am not sure that our ancestors, unless more than commonly well posted-up in their demonology, distinguished clearly between Asmodeus and Mephistopheles. Each of the two evil spirits took in hand a scholar and showed him how many more things there are, on earth at least, than philosophy teaches. The cloak of Asmodeus which bore up the proud young Spaniard, Don Cleofas, was even as the mantle which Mephistopheles bade the learned sensualist, Dr. Faust, grasp with a firm hand. The colder, more relentless fiend, Mephisto, endowed by the old English dramatist, Christopher Marlowe, with an awful melancholy, which Hallam deemed more expressive than the malignant mirth infused by Goethe into the character, was a more jocular personage in the older legends and puppet-plays. As the familiar spirit of the great magician, Dr. Faustus, he played many pranks which, on the modern stage,

would come under the designation “clowning.” But as we now understand Mephisto, he stands higher than Asmodeus and lower than Lucifer; as mockery is more than ridicule and less than pride. Lucifer has no deformity, however slight, nor is the name infernal or profane. He was the light-bringer, son of the morning, a fallen star, indeed, but yet a star—once the pale, pure herald of daylight, now the demon of darkness, the bad genius of man, and the defier of God. Mephistopheles does not defy God; he denies the goodness of God’s works. Nothing finer—nothing more to the purpose of proving that the rough old plays, dumb-show and mummery, if you like, had a motive in making Mephistopheles lame—can I find than these words of Thomas Carlyle:—“Mephistopheles comes before us, not arrayed in the terrors of Cocytus and Phlegethon, but with natural indelible deformity of wickedness. He is the Devil, not of superstition, but of knowledge. Such a combination of perfect understanding with perfect selfishness, of logical life with moral death, so universal a denier both in heart and head, is undoubtedly a child of Darkness, an emissary of the primeval Nothing, and may stand in his merely spiritual deformity, at once potent, dangerous, and contemptible, as the best and only genuine Devil of these latter times.” Need we then cudgel our dull brains further to find why it was that the old mummers, from whose traditions Goethe drew the inspiration of his wonderful poem, made Mephistopheles “halt a little on one foot”?



## “Shouts Without.”

By CHAS. H. Ross.

WHEN I say that things were bad with that ill-fated, or, perhaps, I had better call it ill-starred, little company, I can hope to convey but a faint notion of how things were.

I had not the smallest monetary interest in them or their doings, nor any *locus standi*, as the broker's man put it, in the theatre, or was there any earthly motive, feminine or otherwise, to prompt me to mix myself up in that company's affairs, and yet, for some reason or other, I gradually found myself one of them; a sort of auxiliary force employed by turns in scene-painting, prompting, adapting, checktaking, going on to fill vacancies, apologising even in front of the curtain for the absence of the orchestra, and such other trifling mischances as befel them, and lending a hand with the bill delivery.

I had gone out of town for a holiday, and chanced on Windibank and his chosen band in a dreary little town, at the station of which I alighted by mistake, thus losing my last train on to my destination that night.

I inquired for the best hotel, and went there, bag in hand, and during dinner I asked the waiter, one of the solemnest of men, whether there happened to be any amusements in the town. He knew of none. I seemed to be the only person staying at that dreary hostelry. A couple of gas-burners illuminated my worrisome journey through a hard steak. The rest of the apartment was gloom and mystery. When my funereal attendant brought me some coffee and brandy he said they had told him at the bar there was a theatre, but that the people had not left a bill, and he could not learn whether or not it was open. He added, however, that if it were he didn't suppose it was up to much. On this, I straightway determined to find it out, and, if open, to see the play.

I instinctively felt it must be afar off. I cautiously instituted

inquiries. I was right about distance, but the flyman I hired shed a roseate gleam on things by saying, "It was, anyhow, open last night." He had "noticed it was passing by." The stoppage of the fly in front of the dimly-lighted portal broke the solemn silence of the dark street. The lady in charge of the pay place came out of what I learnt afterwards was called the TREASURY, and occupied the pigeon-hole. I asked the prices of admission, and finding half-a-crown meant a stage-box all to myself I paid my money, and was stage-boxed. There were no programmes, no bills of any sort except two outside the door. I forgot to ask what play it was. I always afterwards forgot to ask. I don't even know now. After the play, I met at the nearest tavern, the low comedian and the heavy man. The latter interested me not a little. He was a good-looking, well-built fellow. He had acted cleverly ; he spoke well. The heroine he had been relentlessly persecuting all night was his wife. She would be waiting, he said, if he stopped longer, and he buttoned his coat across his breast.

"Ah !" he said, "if I could get a show in London ; but there's no chance. Who would ever think of coming to this dead-alive hole to look for talent. You noticed her, I think, sir."

We shook hands as he went out, and he nervously squeezed mine with a look as of entreaty in his eyes to which the tears seemed to brim up and subside again as he coughed shortly.

I was rather surprised the next day, in the lonely smoking-room, at being beamed on by an affable, if somewhat seedy, stranger, who said he had noticed me over night at the theatre. Mine was the only private box occupied, and I and a handful of industrious nut-crackers, who dropped down and threw up shells at one another from the pit and gallery, had constituted the audience. The stranger gave me his card, and said perhaps I might have heard of him ; he was Windibank. Under such circumstances, naturally, I always tell a lie. I said, "Of course," and we soon were on friendly terms. He was the manager of the company.

They had not been doing very good business so far, but a time would come. He had been scandalously treated by the "stars" he had engaged, and by his agents. If he could but weather the storm for another week all would be well. A perfect constellation had been securely booked for the future. I must have been very blind, indeed, not to understand what my friend meant, but I made no promises, though I determined to stay a day or two and see what

would happen. No stars happened; anyhow. I observed, too, that my friend Windibank's statements were strangely mixed. There was so small an amount of jingle in the TREASURY when first return time came round I could not help thinking my nightly contribution did not come amiss. Later on, in the TREASURY, there were some deep-toned grumblings, and now and again, the raising of voices. I began to think things were reaching an end, and so they would have done but for "Shouts Without."

He was a tall, thin young man in a fur-collared coat, carrying in one hand a tin dressing-box, which might have been a cash box (I think Windibank hoped it was) or a dressing-case, or a "make-up box." It proved to be the last-named, and the singing chambermaid right off dubbed it his "eyebrow box." She was a rather witty girl. We were sitting in the Treasury, and I had just given Windibank a cigar, which he was moodily chewing the end of.

"I can't keep this game up much longer," was his last remark. "I've dropped enough over it as it is. It's someone else's turn now."

And I was just thinking to myself that from what I had heard it wasn't only Windibank's money that had gone wrong in this disastrous undertaking, when the door opened, and in strode the Shouter.

"I have come," said he, in quite a haughty tone, "to ask for an engagement, and to offer my services."

"What can you do?" asked Windibank, after a pause of astonishment.

The young man smiled blandly.

"*Anything*," he replied, with confidence.

"What *have* you ever done?"

"*Nothing*," replied he, with a still blander smile, as he opened the lid of the tin box, and displayed its contents. "But, you see, I am prepared."

He certainly seemed to be, as far as make-up was concerned. There, sure enough, were the mongolian, the prepared whiting the rouge, the grenadine, the hair powder, the fard Indien and vein blue, and the rest of it. There were pencils and brushes of all sizes, hare feet, and a big packet of burnt cork. Seemingly, he was even prepared for nigger business, if called on.

"When we have arranged the terms, and settled on the *rôle* in

which I am to make my *début*, perhaps, you gentlemen, will crack a bottle with me at the tavern opposite."

Windibank leant back, and rubbed his chin. He looked again inside the tin box, and then inside the cashless safe, wherein a score of unpaid bills lay, neatly docketted, and he ran his eye over the young man's wardrobe, lingering longest on a massive watch chain, and then, rising, said :

"We'll talk business over the wine."

The business thus talked was somewhat remarkable as far as my experience went. With pleasing candour, Windibank allowed that he had not money enough to pay even half salaries to those he already employed, and no desire without fresh capital were brought into the concern to incur further risk. What was wanted was new blood—an attraction, someone to take the town by storm, a new name in the bill.

"*My name,*" said our host, with the air of a John Kemble, "is Pegg. *I am your man!*"

There was a momentary pause, during which I, for one, struggled desperately to keep my countenance, and finding that impossible, strolled through an open window into the garden, and when out of sight, leant against a wall, and as nearly choked as possible. Two or three minutes later, as soon as I dared risk facing Pegg again, I returned, to find a most astonishing act in progress. Pegg, by name, was helping Windibank on with the fur-collared coat.

"Mr. Pegg has been explaining to me," said Windibank, "that he will supply such funds as are necessary. Mr. Pegg is determined to do the thing well. Here's a mem. for Brown (the heavy man) as to next week's bills. Mr. Pegg has given me a draft on his uncle, Mr. Dolittle, who is an extremely influential man at Dodderington, a matter of twenty miles from here. I have, I find, only just time to catch the train. Good-bye, both. Shall be back in time for the second return. I'll take the two, same time. Good-bye!"

I looked at the time-table, and seeing when the train would return from Dodderington to Dryboneborough (our place) waited on the platform. Windibank came by it sure enough.

"Let's have a drink," was his first greeting, and we had one.

"Well!" I said inquiringly. "How about Pegg's uncle?"

"Damn Pegg's uncle," said Windibank, with emphasis. "And damn Pegg. Was there any money in to-night, do you know?"

"First return one, two, six. But, I say, you've left Pegg's coat in the carriage. The train's still waiting."

"Damn Pegg's coat," said Windibank. "I left it at Dodderington with Pegg's Uncle." Then, changing his tone for a light and airy one. "Have you a sov. about you? You can repay yourself from the Treasury. Here's an I O U."

I gave him the money, and almost at the same moment the guard shouted, "Any more for the last up-train?"

Without another instant's delay Windibank darted into a carriage, waved his hand to me, and was borne away. I paid for the liquours which possibly he had forgotten to do, and began to feel remarkably uncomfortable. The only thing for me to do was to go down to the theatre and tell Pegg and the company all I knew, even if I did not add all I suspected. What I couldn't make my mind up about, though, was whether Windibank had got Pegg's draft cashed. I searched the county directory at my hotel, and found that the only Dolittle in Dodderington mentioned there was a pawnbroker.

When I reached the theatre I met a row of long faces. It was a Saturday night—their best night—and the second return was four shillings. I shewed Windibank's mem., and put it back again into my pocket. I thought there were others wanted the money more than I did.

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From that day, for one week, a kind of commonwealth was established. The onerous duties of treasurer of the empty safe was offered to me, but, I trust with becoming courteousness, declined. I said I was bad at figures.

The question then arose, what was the bill to be on Monday? and the consultation was cut short by the printer calling with his account, and added that he had not executed Windibank's last order. On this Pegg came, for the first time, on the scene, and announced himself to be responsible for past and future, and, pending the return of Windibank, insisted on depositing his watch and chain in the printer's hands. This proceeding necessitated my leading Pegg aside, and telling him not only what I knew but what I suspected.

I mean I thought this course necessary, but was not a little surprised by Pegg taking it all quite coolly, and, with the observa-

tion, "Uncle's an oddish sort of man ; he always says 'No' first," dashed into the question of what play it was to be.

Pegg thought "Don Cæsar de Bazan," and that he was to be the Don. Unfortunately, however, on inquiry, none of the company had ever taken a part in that piece, and nobody had a book ; not even Pegg, who also owned up to being a bit vague as to general details (he never, as well as I could follow, spoke of the mere words), so it was decided to play a mysterious piece, called "Hounded Down ; or, The Shadow of Crime," which, later on, I learnt was a pirated version of our old friend, "The Ticket of Leave Man," and he was to be Bob Brierly.

At this point I suggested that I felt as if I should like to stand an all-round supper (for which, a while before, I had sent an order to a friendly hostelry adjacent), and so we supped ; and next day a telegram fetched me back to town in a great hurry. Not until a week later almost was I able to return, but, throughout that time, I had been devoured by an overwhelming curiosity with respect to the fate of the Dodderington survivors. I came back to chaos and anarchy.

The theatre was still open. The gas still spluttered. The nut-crackers, fewer in number, but stronger of jaw, occupied such seats as were sat on, with others for the support of their lower limbs. Things really and truly *were* bad. Orders had been sown broadcast, but they came not back. Anon, I met with one in pipe-light form at the friendly tavern.

The Pegg no longer supported the tottering edifice. Rage and fury possessed him. In an ill-advised moment the low comedian had visited the printer's office, and, finding in a rough proof of the bill no mention whatever of the character of Bob Brierly or its exponent (Pegg), and feeling that Pegg's name should really appear somewhere or other, added, in a feigned hand at end of cast, "Shouts without, Mr. Pegg!" Why did he do this? No one knows ; or what fell influence prompted a local wag, who came across the same proof a short time afterwards, and, reading the line, corrected it to "Grunts without, Mr. Pig!"

Pig, otherwise Pegg, realising this infamy for the first time on the theatre door, was, as reported, "terrible to behold." He had, according to accounts there and then (in the Treasury), shaken the dust from his feet and had refused to go on. The way the parts were doubled in that drama that night I never yet have

been able to reconcile with any approximation to plot, unless they cut Mrs. Willoughby, Mr. and Mrs. Green Jones, the Navvies, Hawkshaw, and the Tiger, or the Singing Chambermaid played three or four of them in the same dress.

\* \* \* \* \*

I ask myself now, long years after these events, *who and what was Pegg?* Bit by bit I picked up certain information concerning him. Happily, Windibank never did land Pegg's uncle, but appeared to have been received with almost exceptional rudeness. Pegg's uncle *was* a pawnbroker, and with him Windibank pledged Pegg's coat for six shillings. Pegg's watch was aluminium and his albert chain brass. Pegg proposed marriage to, and was accepted by, the Singing Chambermaid, and he paid the preliminary fees at the Registrar's before he suddenly disappeared. To this day, however, if I am creditably informed, the famous make-up box is in her safe keeping. I wonder sometimes whether Pegg was madder than most of us.

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"Talking of dying higher up," an old actor said to me one day, "there was a fool of a fellow—a super—once at a theatre I was at, where we were playing a battle-scene, on which the act drop fell, and three nights running that beggar persisted in dying with his legs over the line and having to be dragged back. The stage manager got awfully mad and, when the curtain fell the third night, and the rest had got up on their feet seeing the chap still lying there, he gave him a pretty sharp kick. But he didn't get up for that, and when a carpenter turned him over, they found he had died in earnest. His name was Pegg!"



## The Duties of an Audience.

BY ETHEL COXON.

IF ever there should be framed in this country a Catechism of Art Doctrine, the theory and practice thereof, one chapter which would surely be largely appreciated by the general public would be that on the duties of an artist towards his neighbour—*i.e.*, that same public. But the good public would feel small need of a corresponding chapter on its own duties to the artist, whose work it yet profits by far more fully than the latter can do by its recognition.

Certes, when Keats dies, having concentrated the passion and perfume of his nature into that cup of “the true, the blushing Hippocrène,” which he offered to lips unworthy so divine a draught, we turn in sudden rage to curse the brutal hand that dashed the chalice aside as a thing of no worth; but the true critical spirit which bids the self-appointed judge stay his sentence till he has proved how and why such a man’s work be good or bad, is still rare. The English public makes up for the want of a recognised critical authority, like the French Academy, by being its own censor; and, as a body, its incapacity to treat Art seriously, is only equalled by its sheep-like docility in following any leader, who will but assert with sufficient loudness and lack of proof

“I am Sir Oracle  
And when I ope my mouth, let no dog bark.”

True, things have mended of late years; we do recognise that though any human being’s honestly-expressed opinion has its weight, still “I don’t like it,” or the reverse assertion, is not the conclusion of the whole matter in regard to the value of works of Art. The gist of Blake’s profound, half-true couplet

“Nor is it possible for thought  
A greater than itself to know.”

is accepted as a possibility, and we do sometimes feel there may be things above and beyond us, which we can best divine, not by

striving to possess them, but by letting them possess us. If we express distaste to a book, or admiration of it, we recognise a certain obligation to unmuzzle our wisdom and give a reason, good or bad, for our opinion. Our praise or blame of a picture is influenced by our knowledge of its actual merits, even though they may not appeal to us; but in the matter of dramatic criticism, we still remain magnificently one-sided and autocratic.

We talk about the player's art a great deal—too much, indeed, as many actors, weary of the turning of the whole of society into one vast green-room would be the first to agree—we rush to see every new play; we discuss the private characters and lives of the performers, in which we have no possible concern; we, perhaps, consider ourselves more interested in the drama than in any other art; yet there is none in regard to which our shortcomings are more obvious.

And the reason is not far to seek; our immediate duty to the player is nearer than is that which we owe to other artists. The poet may sing, the sculptor chisel, and the work we reject may appeal to other ages and in the far future be crowned as very good, or die into oblivion. Time tries all art—except the actor's. Cibber's pretty and pathetic lament of the pity 'tis, that the grace and power of an actor must fade and be forgotten, or only live in the faint and imperfect memory of a few spectators, De Musset's more passionate echo of the same note in the wonderful verses to Malibran, express what we have most of us felt when leaving a theatre, where we have been thrilled by mighty or lovely acting. The actor must receive his recognition in the present, or he will never receive it at all.

And this recognition is as the breath of his nostrils, without it his art can have no life. The painter or musician may find the joy of their work alone sufficient to them—its own exceeding great reward; the actor cannot do so. The audience, "who sit fresh chapleted to listen" to the poet or composer, are fit but few, in comparison to the wider and more diverse circles unto which the acted drama appeals. A fondness for theatregoing by no means implies intellectual ardour or capacity in man or woman, and one of the actor's greatest snares lies in this very popularity of his art; this fact of its appealing not only to the most thoughtful and the most cultured, but to the most frivolous. It is so easy to act down to the popular level, so difficult to gain appreciation of earnest, consistent, individual work.

Sir Godfrey Kneller's "Praise me, Sir, praise me ; how can I paint your portrait if you don't ?" but faintly reflects the necessity to the actor that the audience shall be receptive to his magnetism ere it can hold them and return to him, in a three-fold cord, which is not quickly broken. *Pace* Diderôt, the player's nerves must be more or less in a high-strung hypersensitive state,\* and the more he is lost in his part, the more one slight sneering laugh from the front, one whisper, more distinct through the hush than loudly spoken words, will act as a sudden jar, bringing him back from the world of the play to a confusing sense of unreal reality. The presence—even in the supreme moments of a drama—of the thronged faces witnessing, as from afar, the pain and passion; the love and grief he renders, is not only one of the recognised conditions of his art but necessary to its existence. It no more interferes with his sense of the truth of the scene than the mechanical action of writing hinders an author's thought, although it may limit and define it. This great cloud of witnesses is as the all-seeing, silent sympathy of his own soul, and the soul of the man he interprets to them, a larger self, of which his consciousness is half unconscious ; but let careless, wandering stares, vague smiles, whispering, and inattention meet him, instead of the quiet intentness which tells the actor he holds the spectators with himself, and this *alter ego* changes into a crowd of men and women with whom he has naught in common, who neither understand nor care for the passion which possesses him. They do not realise this man he shows them, and so he ceases to realise him, himself.

"The drama's laws the drama's patrons give,  
And those who live to please must please to live."

granted, but we must also grant Cowley's noble definition of liberty, "a people being governed by laws which they have made themselves." If playgoers make the drama's laws, they must perforce be bound by them ; and actors cannot please their audience unless the latter please to be pleased. Few persons would assert that their duties towards the players and the play begin and end with the money paid for their seats ; unless, indeed, they wish to emulate the two young gentlemen in "Sandford and Merton," who accompanied Harry and Tommy to the play. The scene therein narrated is very

\*See Mr. Dolby's account of the effect of Mr. Dickens's various readings on the height of the author's pulse.

pithy and profitable, and the description of how Masters Mash and Compton talked loudly, comparing the travelling actors with those they had seen in town, and disparaged the former, to Harry's silent indignation, as he reflected that these were doing their best possible for their audience's pleasure, is not entirely without a moral even in these days.

Even if we receive but what we give, true lovers of the theatre will own that, however deep may be their interest and their silence, it is good measure pressed down and running over, which in return is given back into their bosoms. Such of us as have known "the sweet possessive pangs" which are ours in those brief full hours of enjoyment, leaving their heritage of delightsome memory, those moments of witnessing the passion of Juliet or the great and terrible heart-break of Othello, when, in sharing the suffering of those high heroic souls,

"We such clusters had,  
As made us nobly wild, not mad,"

wonder what we can offer back—how render our thankfulness for such gifts as these?

Not much, in truth ; the public must be content to play Diomed to the artist's Glaucus, but none the less is such return as it can make his due. If a play be a poor one, and badly or carelessly played, the audience has a perfect right to show its displeasure so long as it does so in a justifiable manner ; and the quicker the public appreciation of good work grows, so will the standard as regards plays and acting be raised. The determined, if silent, rejection of paltry or ignoble work is also one of the public's duties, and often an ungrateful one. But if the performance, like most things mundane, be a mixture of good and bad, it is surely a more pleasant task to watch for the qualities in actors or piece worthy to be admired, than to condemn the whole thing as "a wretched, dreary business." There are few of us who can put their fingers on the very pulse of the actor's excellence in a part, and show the centre of his creation of a character, in a few pregnant words, as did Charles Lamb ; but everyone can take a little trouble to understand the player's conception of the man he plays, and how far and by what means he makes it clear, thus doing him less scant justice or injustice, than by declaring, "It was just my idea of it," or *vice versa*. Very few can be as George Sand's Marquise, who became the art conscience of her actor lover ; but when other parts

of the house echo with applause, why should the front rows of stalls sit unmoved, unsmiling—be their occupants pleased or not—with what seems a cold wonder in their eyes at the enthusiasm of others. People might manage to be seated before the curtain rises as they are bound in honour, save in exceptional cases, not to rise until it falls. Such worse forms of ill-breeding and of failure in one's obligations to the performers and to the rest of the audience as whispering, tittering, and behaving in modest emulation of Masters Mash and Compton, call less for censure, because generally condemned in theory, if not in practice. But a word may be hazarded as to coughing. Is this complaint, so infectious among a theatrical audience, really incurable? There are few things more irritating to an actor, or destructive of the effect of his words, than the barking sound echoed from the valleys of the stalls to the heights of the gallery. If it be unavoidable, sufferers from it should keep away from the playhouse; but one thing is certain—an interested audience does not cough.

Actors are usually terribly in earnest; their faults with their merits spring mostly from that one root, while an audience's shortcomings arise from its being ready to count the whole thing as a jest. It is an after-dinner amusement, this summing up of life's story of joy and pain, love and hate, humour and tenderness, falsehood and truth. We talk of the acted drama as an art, but till we realise it as an art, in which not only players but playgoers must bear their part, albeit a passive one, we shall never feel its true significance and power.



## The Provincial Pantomimes.

BY AUSTIN BRERETON.

It was with a feeling of considerable relief that on a certain Monday a week or two ago I found myself at King's Cross Station, on the point of visiting some half-dozen of our principal towns where pantomime still finds favour. The day was mild, but the air was heavy—full, in point of fact, of a calamity which descended a day or two later in the shape of the snow fiend. So I went upon my way rejoicingly, making Leeds my first stopping-place. Punctually to the minute, the excellent express train of the Great Northern Railway drew up at the appointed time at the Leeds Platform. I must freely confess that I am not particularly fond of Leeds. Perhaps it is that the contrast between Leeds and London is too great for my tender soul. Whether this be the case or not, I certainly share the feelings of those distinguished persons alluded to in Mr. J. Wilton Jones's cleverly-written "book" of the pantomime at Mr. Wilson Barrett's truly Grand Theatre, New Briggate :—

"If Princes ever come to Leeds, young man,  
They leave the town as quickly as they can."

Consequently I left myself only bare time to despatch a hasty dinner at the Queen's Hotel, where a waiter with a Circassian head of hair floated around me like a sprite, by way, I suppose, of prelude to the pantomime, and, within an hour and a half of my arrival in Leeds, I was snugly ensconced in a box at the Grand Theatre, which was literally crammed from floor to ceiling. Presently Mr. J. Sidney Jones (yet another Jones!) took his seat in the orchestra, and after a lively overture the curtain ascended on the grand Christmas pantomime of "Dick Whittington the Second; or, the Cat, the Rat, the Bat, and the Fairies of the Bells." From this elaborate title it will be gathered that Mr. Wilton Jones allows himself plenty of latitude. He has succeeded in providing the material for a bustling, merry, and most

spirited production, which contains not only scenery of a high class, but plenty of food for hearty laughter as well. Mr. Stafford Hall's painting of Highgate Hill is an excellent piece of scenery, and Mr. Lee Anderson's cleverly-arranged ballet of elves, which takes place in this scene, is highly appropriate to it. Mr. Hall is also at his best in the Emperor's Palace, where a charming Egyptian dance, also arranged by Mr. Anderson, is given, while Mr. Louis Edouard has provided, in the ship scene, and in that of the Lord Mayor's Show, as good pictures of their kind as have been witnessed in London. The spectacular effect of this production is greatly enhanced by an interesting procession of the trades typical of the various Yorkshire towns, and a review of representatives of the troops of all nations. Dick Whittington is impersonated by Miss Marie Loftus, a lady well known to the music-hall stage. Miss Loftus is just the opposite to the loud, swaggering music-hall "artist," who mistakes vulgarity for fun, and noise for humour. She is refined and pleasing, she sings agreeably, and she dances very well. Alice finds a pretty, attractive representative in Miss Carmen Barker, who would, however, be better suited on a smaller stage. Mr. Charles E. Stevens is evidently a favourite with the audience as Fitzwarren, and Mr. Austin Melford is entertaining and inoffensive as the cook. Mr. J. W. Rowley, as Will the Waggoner, has a quiet humour which is much appreciated, and Mr. A. Gow Bentinck is, indeed, a terribly wicked witch. He is an actor who knows how to make the best of a small part. Not the least of the attractions at the Leeds Grand is an individual who impersonates a frog with surprising success. Mr. Barrett, it will thus be seen, has brought together a capital company for his pantomime, which has been produced under the experienced stage-management of Mr. Henry Hastings.

The palm of pantomime in Edinburgh has, undoubtedly, been carried away this year by Mr. H. Cecil Beryl's production at the Theatre Royal. Mr. Fred. Locke, the author of the libretto, has availed himself of pantomime licence by including the story of the Babes in the Wood with that of Robin Hood and Maid Marian in his "book." He has accomplished the task gracefully and adroitly, mingling the stories together with great skill. Opportunity is thus provided for plenty of good acting and elaborate spectacular

display, advantages of great moment which combine to make as pleasant a pantomime as could be desired. The Babes have pretty and intelligent representatives in Miss Katie and Miss Mabel Grattan, while that wicked uncle, Sir Carlton Hill, has a good exponent in Mr. Richard Waldon. A better or brighter Robin Hood than Miss Harriet Laurie has not been seen. This young actress has a pleasing presence, a winning smile, and a voice of much sweetness. She acts, sings, and dances well, and is altogether quite one of the best burlesque boys I have seen. Miss Marion Graham as Maid Marian and Miss Rosenthal as Helen sing most pleasantly, Miss Retta Walton is animated and agreeable as Allan a' Dale, Miss Florence Young is a capital Will Scarlet, and Miss Lesley Bell is a good "good fairy," the only fault to be found with her being that she is altogether too "plump and pleasing." Fairies should not be so. The peculiar dry humour of Mr. Allen Thomas is well suited to the portrayal of one of the ruffian robbers, and he has a capital companion in villainy in Mr. George T. Minshull. Mr. Robert Courtneidge as the Nurse and Mr. Fred Selby as Friar Tuck deserve praise, and the movements of Mr. Fred Walton, made up as a white-faced, red-coated soldier toy figure familiar to the days of childhood, are vastly amusing. Mr. Beryl, having thus seen to the acting of his pantomime, has spared no expense in relation to the mounting of it. Nothing could be prettier than Mr. William Glover's painting of the old-world village of Sunnydale, with its delightful rustic ballet. Mr. R. S. Smythe's "Land of Fancy" and "The Forest Fringe" are excellent examples of scenic art. A pantomime without a big show scene would be nothing nowadays, so an elaborate scenic display has been arranged for the "Hall of Dazzling Light," a brilliant scene, solidly set at the back, where dancers and bicyclists precede a wonderfully well arranged procession of nations. Indeed, the whole production has been brought out with care and lavish expenditure, and with the happiest result. Mr. Beryl, be it noted, has had the invaluable assistance, in the production, of Mr. Frank Emery, one of our most experienced stage-managers, and a past master in pantomime production.

The best efforts in "Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves," at the handsome Lyceum Theatre, Edinburgh, which is presided over by Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Howard, are a beautiful fan ballet and an equally good Oriental ballet. Then there are a troupe of wonder-

fully clever bicyclists and a donkey which is irresistibly comic. In fact, this donkey is the most amusing fellow I saw on my travels, and ought to be brought to the metropolis without delay. Mr. W. H. Denny is a dryly humorous Ali Baba and Miss Fanny Marriott is a sprightly Ganem. But I did not like the Cogia of Mr. Harry Monkhouse. Men in women's clothes are seldom inoffensive on the stage unless they are made unprepossessing in appearance, a hint which Mr. Monkhouse in Edinburgh, and Mr. Arthur Wellesley in Liverpool, would do well to take. Mr. J. W. Bradbury makes a quaint Mustapha. Miss Rosie St. George, the Morgiana of Mr. Howard's cast, I did not see, as she was ill on the occasion of my visit, her place being taken by Miss L. Durant, a graceful actress of the part.

At Mr. Thos. W. Charles's Grand Theatre, Glasgow, elaborate scenery is the order of the day. "The Forty Thieves" is a subject allowing for great things in this direction, and, provided with an immense stage, every possible advantage has been taken by Mr. Charles to provide one of the most extensive and artistic spectacular displays to be seen out of London. Nothing could be better than the Eastern bazaar, with its pretty slave dance; and the robbers' prismatic cave, with its evolutions of the famous forty in their sparkling, golden-jewelled, electric armour, is a particularly brilliant sight. Exceedingly brilliant, too, is Ali Baba's palace, with its procession of splendidly attired guests and its impressive Oriental ballet. Where so much attention is devoted to scenery and dresses, the acting and fun naturally suffer, but Miss Minnie Byron makes a delightful Ganem, while Miss Ethel Castleton acts gracefully and sings with sweetness and expression as Morgiana. Mr. Alfred Hemming is agile and amusing as Hassarac, Mr. Harry Fischer is a nimble Shacabac, Miss Lizzie Kelsey is a commanding Abdallah in more senses than one, and Mr. Robert Nelson is amusing as Falalla, Ali's better half.

For genuine, honest fun commend me to the South side Glasgow pantomime, the Princess's, where "Robinson Crusoe" is attracting overflowing audiences, thanks, as I take it, to the acting of Mrs. Crusoe by Mr. Ramsey Danvers, who is the "old woman" *par excellence* of the Scottish stage. Mrs. Crusoe is, of course, turned into a Scotch woman, and in the hands of Mr. Ramsey Danvers she is the cause of uncontrollable laughter to thousands

upon thousands of good folk. The dry "pawky" humour of Mr. Ramsey Danvers is of immense service to him. He keeps the house in a roar of laughter all the time he is on the stage, apparently without effort, and certainly without the slightest taint of suggestion. One great charm of his performance, in short, is the manner in which he loses his identity. The actor is submerged in the character, so that in the Mrs. Crusoe of Mr. Ramsey Danvers you see only the quaint old woman, who might stand for a picture from real life. Mr. Danvers has the pantomime practically to himself; but Miss Maggie Duggan, as Robinson, proves herself a pleasant, bright actress, and a good singer. A sailor's ballet is, of course, greatly appreciated at this theatre, but the ballet of the months, adapted from "*Excelsior*," and arranged by Mr. Lee Anderson, also deservedly falls in for applause. Mr. Cecil Beryl here, as at Edinburgh, has had the able assistance of Mr. Frank Emery in the production.

Mrs. Edward Saker's pantomime at the Alexandra Theatre, Liverpool, like that of the Grand, Glasgow, is mainly a great scenic display. Once more the skilled hand of Mr. John Brunton has been employed with the happiest result. Mr. Brunton is an artist of singular taste and ability, and, but give him scope, he will produce a series of as beautiful pictures as heart of man could wish. Mr. Brunton has fortunately been provided with vast opportunity for the exhibition of his art, thanks to the cleverly-contrived and gracefully-written story of "*Cinderella*," as told by Messrs. T. Edgar Pemberton and J. James Hewson. The result, as I have said, is singularly happy, for Mr. Brunton has set upon the stage some lovely scenes, many of which are, to my mind, far too good for pantomime. The very first scene of all, the village, occupies the entire stage, and is simply idyllic in its pastoral beauty. The forest glade is quite lovely, and the ball-room is a brilliant and effective piece of painting. The transformation scene, entitled "*The Gardens of the Ocean*," excels in beauty anything yet done by Mr. Brunton. It is chiefly remarkable for its harmonious and delicate colouring, and the absence of golden-haired fairies ascending to the flies. An historical procession by children, a fox hunt with an old English hunting chorus, and a really beautiful swan ballet are among the other attractions of this superb production. Then there are the dances of Mdlle. Pertoldi and Miss Florence Valeria, the pantomime performance

of Mephisto by Mr. George Lupino, junr., a phantom fight by the Brothers Lupino, and the aerial flights of Mdlle. Ænea, to further enhance the splendour of the production. The actors are overshadowed by the brilliancy of their surroundings. Mr. George Walton is certainly amusing as the impecunious Baron, and Mr. T. P. Haynes is capital as one of the ugly sisters. To Mr. Arthur Wellesley I have already alluded, and I fail to see anything entertaining in the meaningless movements of Mr. Mark Melford as the Baron's Buttons. Miss Carrie Coote is a bright little Dandini, and Miss Letty Lind dances gracefully as Cinderella. A meed of praise should be accorded to Mr. G. W. Harris, Mrs. Saker's stage-manager, who has been of great service to the production; and Mr. John Ross is to be commended for his excellent selection and arrangement of the music.

The pantomimes at the Theatre Royal and the Prince's Theatre, Manchester, vie with each other in the matter of scenery. In this respect, both are excellent, but the Royal is the better of the two. "Dick Whittington," written by Mr. T. F. Doyle, is the pantomime at the latter house. Its most artistic scene is that of Highgate Hill by night, where a ballet of elves occurs. This, I think, is the best ballet in the provincial pantomimes, and it is made so by the admirably appropriate music of Mr. John Crook. It is more than an ordinary pleasure to witness a ballet so beautifully conceived as this, and so well danced to suggestive music. Mr. Crook's effective music has also been employed with success in the pretty nautch ballet in the Imperial ball-room. The Lord Mayor's Show at Guildhall is quite as fine in its way as anything to be seen in London. Miss Lizzie Coote, originally in the cast as Dick Whittington, has been ill for some time, so her place is taken by Miss Alice Aynsley Cook, a singer of good repute. Mr. Charles Collette, as the Idle Apprentice, does not seem to be in his element. Mr. Lionel Rignold is sufficiently amusing as the Cook, and Miss Minnie Marshall is a pretty Alice. But acting is not the strong point of the Royal pantomime.

The best acting in the country pantomimes is to be observed at the Prince's Theatre, Manchester, in "Cinderella," the "book" of which is from the pen of Mr. Harry Nicholls. Mr. Edward Righton and Mr. Walter Wardroper are the funniest of sisters ever seen in "Cinderella." Mr. Righton simply revels in the part of

Blondina, familiarly called "Baby." This clever comedian has done nothing to equal this truly comic performance for a long time. He is legitimately funny in the impersonation, and the rich, unctuous humour of it is immensely entertaining. His medley song with Cinderella is as laughable as it is clever. Mr. Wardroper takes his part more quietly than Mr. Righton, but makes it amusing for all that. The ideal Cinderella has at last appeared in Miss Edith Brandon, who not only looks the character, but acts it into the bargain. She thoroughly loses herself in the part, and so gives a piece of acting as interesting as it is pretty and sympathetic. Her impersonation is made additionally valuable by a sweet and pure voice, which she uses to great advantage. To my mind, the Cinderella of Miss Edith Brandon is the attraction of the pantomime, and by far the best and most noticeable realisation of the character that I have seen. As Miss Brandon is the ideal Cinderella, so Miss Edith Blande is the ideal prince of pantomime. Of a commanding and an eminently pleasing presence, full of spirits, and of easy, graceful carriage, she throws herself fully into her part, and acts the lover, as a lover should be acted, with princely mien and ardour. She is thoroughly and exceptionally excellent as Prince Pastorelle, and comes only second to Miss Brandon's Cinderella because her part does not afford her quite so much opportunity for acting. As it is, no pantomime Prince equals her this season.

"Robinson Crusoe," at the Birmingham Theatre Royal, is, in my estimation, far and away the best of the provincial pantomimes in general excellence of scenery, costumes, and acting, to say nothing of its music, which surpasses that in all the other productions, in point of melody and liveliness. To particularise all the scenery would occupy more space than is at my disposal, but I cannot refrain from alluding to the effective nature of the ship scene, the beauty of the Fairy Queen's bower, and the brilliancy of the tropical island, with its ballet of squaws, its procession of tribes, and the final arrival of a British war ship. A ballet of fire fiends is wonderfully well done, and by way of contrast to this nothing could be better than the school scene with its seventy scholars decked out in Kate Greenaway costumes, singing as happily and as merrily as children only can. Miss Vesta Tilley plays Robinson with glee, brightness, and activity, and she sings capitally. Moreover, there is no sign of the music

hall about her. Miss Alice Burville sings sweetly as the Fairy Queen, and Mr. F. W. Newham is an excellent Dame Crusoe. Miss Millie Steele, Miss Jessie Acton, and Mr. Arthur Ricketts are also of signal service, and the dancing of the Rosa troupe, with the clever feats of that adroit conjurer, Mons. Trewey, add to the already great attractiveness of the production. The libretto, by Mr. James J. Blood, is smartly and neatly written, and Mr. Edward Edmonds, another stage manager of considerable experience, is responsible for the production. Let me advise such of my readers as care to see a brisk, well-constructed, amusing, and thoroughly enjoyable pantomime, to lose no time in finding their way to Euston, and travelling thence by the well-ordered, fast, and punctual trains of the London and North-Western Railway to Birmingham, there to see "Robinson Crusoe" at the Theatre Royal. If the visit can be extended to Manchester and Liverpool it will be time well spent. I will answer for it that the pantomime at the Birmingham Theatre Royal is the best to be seen in the country this year, and those at Manchester and Liverpool are also well worth witnessing.

"Gulliver's Travels," written by Mr. Harry Paulton for the Birmingham Prince of Wales's Theatre, suffers from the fact that children play far too large a part in it. One can have too much of a good thing and children repeated in large and frequent doses are apt to pall upon you. Nor is the acting quite as good as it might be, although no fault can be found with Mr. Fawcett Lomax as Gulliver, or Miss Addy Conyers, who makes a handsome and attractive Prince.

From this survey of the principal provincial pantomimes it may be seen that the tendency to produce an elaborate spectacle, instead of a bustling, funny pantomime, is on the increase. Indeed, the Christmas production now resembles an elaborate opera-bouffe of a heavy nature more nearly than anything else. Laughter is sacrificed for scenery, and general dulness is the result of a too ambitious nature to please the eye. The quality of the music this year may be judged from the fact that the immortal "What cheer, 'Ria" and "What a happy land is England" pursued me nearly everywhere. The abominable "advertising curtain" is to be found in all the principle theatres now. It was unheard of a few years ago; now it reigns supreme. Why, I wonder, should this thing of horror be allowed to exist?

## An Old Valentine.

A SQUARE oak box, and in it there reposest,  
Couched on a paper that is torn and old,  
A tiny bunch of withered yellow roses,  
The outcome of a tale that once was told  
To eyes whose love-light woke the love in mine :  
In short, a dainty old-world valentine.

Bright was the morning of our wintry meeting,  
Blue were the skies, and piercing-sweet the air,  
The quiring birds sang lovingly in greeting,  
The sun shone bravely on her tawny hair,  
And then these roses left her hands for mine  
Wrapped in this paper : *For my Valentine.*

Long years ago ! A ghost of vanished glory  
When hearts beat high, and " all the world was young,"  
When Age seemed little but a fabled story,  
A dismal phantom that the poets sung,  
And Life, perpetual youth. A state, in fine,  
Where dear lips whispered : " Be my Valentine."

Long years ago ! And so I shut my roses  
Back in their box and place it gently by.  
The stillness of my lonely home discloses  
The love they shrine is but a memory ;—  
But why we parted,—if the fault were mine,—  
I say not. But I keep my valentine.

M. E. W.

## Thespis at Roulette.

BY CHARLES HERVEY.

THE decade from 1860 to 1870 may fairly claim to rank among the most brilliant epochs in the social history of Baden Baden. That delightful resort—very different from what it now is—was then the chosen rendezvous of fashion, the favourite sojourn of pleasure-seekers from every quarter of the civilised world, attracted thither, it must be owned, less by the picturesque beauty of the spot itself than by the thousand and one allurements ingeniously calculated to satisfy the requirements of the most Sybaritical tourist, from the mere Boulevard lounger to the incorrigible votary of the board of green cloth. No one understood better how to bait his hook than the wily Dupressoir, wiser even in his generation than his predecessor Bénazet; like Tibby Postlethwaite in the farce, he had a “hi” on the main chance, and, instead of limiting his efforts to the gratification of one class of visitors, made it his especial business to please all. For Materfamilias invitations to balls and concerts abounded; sportsmen were seduced by free permission to shoot and fish whenever they chose; while for the delectation of the general public artists of every nationality, operatic and dramatic, reaped a fabulous harvest by their exertions in the miniature theatre and the *Salon des Fleurs*.

Above all, the autocrat of the bank spared no pains to draw within his magic circle as many representatives of Gallic literature as he could possibly tempt to exchange their beloved asphalt for the terrace of the *Conversation*, or the shady promenade of the Lichtenthal alley; especially laying himself out to secure the presence of at least three or four recognised purveyors of tittle tattle to the *Gaulois* and the *Figaro*. Thus, at whatever hour you chanced to pass the *Café Weber*, you were almost certain to discover Henri de Pène, Albert Wolff, or Auguste Villemot installed at one of the circular tables *al fresco*, quaffing apocryphal Bavarian

beer and minutely inspecting from this coign of vantage the latest "creations" of Worth and their wearers; while you were equally sure to come across the Russian Tourgenieff chatting amicably with Madame Pauline Viardot, and the conical bearded Ernest Feydeau strutting to and fro, resplendently attired in the smartest and freshest of velvet jackets.

It was an understood thing that, as far as the journalists and minor men of letters were concerned, a free railway ticket should be accorded them, and that during their stay at Baden they should be housed and fed at the cost of the bank; and as it was delicately hinted to them that any money they might lose at the tables would be returned to them on their departure, they necessarily felt in honour bound to abstain from playing. Siraudin alone refused to accept the offered conditions. "My good Dupressoir," he said, "permit me to remark that when I attack the roulette I give no quarter and expect none. I and my carpet bag are pretty well known at the Baden station, but we only pay flying visits, and never stay anywhere long, for certain financial reasons on which it is unnecessary to dwell. I'm here to-day, but I may as well say *au revoir*, for unless the six first numbers come up oftener than they usually do, I shall be half way back to Paris by this time to-morrow."

In the course of the ten years alluded to, no less than five theatres were successively and brilliantly represented in the valley of the Oos; these were the Comédie Française, the Italiens, the Opéra Comique, the Bouffes Parisiens and the Palais Royal. The magnates of the Rue Richelieu, including Regnier, Bressant, Delaunay, and Mdlle. Madeleine Brohan, doubtless considered the faintest show of interest in the vagaries of the rolling ball *infra dig.*, for they rarely if ever appeared in the play-rooms; their subordinates, however, were less scrupulous, and more than one *pensionnaire* occasionally ventured a five-franc piece on some favourite number, or even indulged in the too often fallacious hope of dropping on a "serie" at the *trente et quarante*.

Whether the—more or less—Italian colleagues of Mdlle. Krauss contributed their mite to the coffers of the bank or not, I am unable to say; but can safely affirm that the *prima donna* herself, whose Lucrezia Borgia then filled the little theatre to over-flowing, was far too thrifty a lady to risk a single sou of her very liberal salary in so unprofitable a speculation. Nor was the siren of the

Opéra Comique, Mdlle. Constance Lefebvre, whose marriage with Faure was still a thing of the future, by any means disposed to waste her time listening to the monotonous shibboleth of the croupiers, or in watching the alternate triumph and discomfiture of the sallow-cheeked, pearl-grey gloved Dutchman who broke the bank one day and was broken himself the next. On the contrary, she kept studiously aloof from the temptations of Hades ; and when my old friend, Jules Costé, whose great ambition was to write an opera for her, complained bitterly of his constant ill luck, chaffed him unmercifully, and told him plainly that it served him right for embarking his slender capital in so untrustworthy a “galère.”

I have before me while I write a memorial of the composer in question, in the shape of his first attempt at orchestration, accompanied by the following note. “This document will be extremely precious *some day*, when a grateful country shall have erected a statue in my honour !” Alas, poor Costé has long since gone over to the majority ; and of the two comic operettas contributed by him to the repertory of the Variétés, neither, I fear, is likely to be revived for the benefit of posterity.

I had lost sight for some years of the lively soubrette, Mdlle. Alice Ozy, since her retirement from the stage, but found her at Baden in July, 1870, shortly before the declaration of war. During her dramatic career she had amassed, mainly by speculations at the Bourse, a considerable fortune, and invested part of it in the purchase of a pretty villa near Lichtenthal. Now and then, but at rare intervals, the rustling of her silk dress distracted for a moment the attention of the roulette players ; but a double louis placed on No. 8, corresponding with the combined letters of her Christian and surname, was her sole and invariable venture, and whether she won or lost, a single essay satisfied her, and she sailed out of the room as placidly and unconcernedly as she had entered it.

The great German tenor, Niemann, the husband of Marie Seebach and the original representative of Tannhäuser, was an inveterate gambler. In 1868, I think, he came to Baden, and commenced his campaign by boldly attacking the bank with rouleaux of double Fredericks, apparently the proceeds of a professional tour. A very short time, however, sufficed to moderate his ardour ; and fresh sinews of war becoming indispensable, his

stalwart figure might continually be seen striding along the promenade in the direction of the telegraph office, until, the manœuvre having been too frequently repeated, the supplies abruptly ceased ; so that when a day or two later he failed to put in an appearance at his usual hour, I needed no *Œdipus* to tell me why !

When Offenbach brought out his “*Princesse de Trébizonde*” for the first time at the Baden theatre, the handsome sum he obtained for it profited him but little, almost every shilling of the honorarium ultimately finding its way back to M. Dupressoir’s treasury. Maître Jacques had an irresistible craving for excitement, and not a day passed without his following the example of the banker Haber, and frittering away at least a thousand francs in abortive attempts to spot the winning number. He never seemed in the slightest degree depressed by his bad luck, but watched the gradual absorption of his capital with his ordinary stereotyped smile ; and, when his funds were exhausted, strolled leisurely into the “*galérie des fumeurs*,” and soon forgot his losses in the tranquil enjoyment of one of Herr Rheinbolt’s cigarettes.

The only interpreter of his (then) latest work for whom the roulette possessed a deplorably magnetic attraction was Madame Thierret, the excellent comic old woman of the company, who every afternoon from three to four was a fixture at the table. There she sat, solemnly counting over her little store of five-franc pieces symmetrically arranged in piles before her, and noting the progressive diminution of her stock with a disturbed air ; ever and anon muttering in a low but perfectly audible voice, “*Encore perdu ! c'est é-ton-nant, in-con-ce-vable !*” It is but fair to suppose that fortune occasionally favoured her, but such windfalls must have been few and far between ; for, if at the expiration of her engagement, her return journey to Paris had depended on her own ability to defray it, she would most assuredly have been left behind.

Early in July, 1870, the “Queen of Spas” was enlivened by the arrival of a choice detachment from the Palais Royal, including Gil Pérez, Brasseur, Luguet and Mdlle. Julia Baron, of whom the last-named alone patronised the roulette ; her male colleagues wisely preferring the less perilous occupation of angling at Gernsbach, or arranging excursions to La Favorite and Eberstein. Now and then after rehearsal Gil Pérez and Brasseur, inseparable allies, appeared on the promenade ; the former, grave as a judge, attired in a suit of “*dittos*” strongly suggestive of “*la belle*

Jardinière," and the latter smirking and smiling in a remarkable "get up" not unlike that of the traditional "swell" of a pantomime. Meanwhile the fair Julia, escorted by a devoted band of admirers, and bearing in mind the precept "on n'est pas ici pour s'amuser," was hard at work immediately behind the croupier presiding over what has not inaptly been denominated the "infernal machine," staking her money freely, and on each unsuccessful *coup* appealing with a coquettish "moue" to the sympathy of her surrounding body guard. One of these, a young man just arrived from Homburg, told me an anecdote highly characteristic of the natives of that rival spa, which will not be out of place here.

During the first weeks of his stay he had had an extraordinary run of luck, his winnings exceeding sixty thousand francs; and imagining, as is too often the case, that this happy state of things would infallibly continue, became reckless in his expenditure, and squandered his gold right and left as the fancy prompted him. Among other capricious investments, he one day purchased an elaborately ornamented watch fitted with the latest improvements, which the jeweller assured him was cheap at eighteen hundred francs; and flattered himself with the idea that he had made an excellent bargain. Before the week was out, however, the tide of fortune having completely turned against him, he was reduced to the necessity of disposing of his recent acquisition, and, returning to the shop where he had bought it, inquired of the dealer, on the plea that it did not altogether suit him, what he would give him for it. The jeweller at first demurred, saying that it was not his habit to re-purchase articles once sold by him; but, finally—as an especial favour—consented to take it back for ninety francs; and, on the owner's indignantly protesting against so inadequate an offer, coolly replied that watches were almost unsaleable at Homburg, no frequenter of the gaming table caring to be reminded how much time he had lost there!

The pet number affected by Mdlle. Baron was 17, and she never staked on any other. Once, and but once I witnessed her triumph when it came up, piled with louis and five-franc pieces; she positively screamed with delight, and such was the sensation created by the event that the solid gravity of the *employés* momentarily relaxed, and even M. Gérard, the inspector, condescended to smile. "One swallow," however, "makes no summer," and the lively actress, after a long and protracted struggle, was

ultimately cleared out. It was subsequently whispered, greatly to the credit of M. Dupressoir's gallantry, that a considerable portion of her losses had been refunded to her, on the sole condition that she should henceforth refrain from pursuing her favourite pastime, and, like Mr. Mizzle in "A day well spent," content herself in future with being "only a spectator."



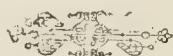
## Don't Tell.

(FOR MUSIC.)

I KNOW of a sweet little nook by a stile,  
But I won't say *where*!  
Yet it was delicious to dream awhile  
    In the shadow there!  
Pleasant to dream where the winds are low,  
Where the dove makes moan, and the blue-bells blow,  
With the merriest maid in the world to woo.  
But I won't tell *who*  
    To you! To you!

We lingered long in that nook so green,  
But I won't say *when*!  
Though the merle wots well of the spot I mean,  
    For *he* saw us *then*.  
I drew from the beck a forget-me-not,  
As she took it I said—but I won't say what—  
And a glad gleam shot through her soft blue eye,  
But I won't say *why*!  
    Not I! Not I!

F. B. DOVETON.



## Our Musical-Box.

THAT unquestionably great gun, Canon Liszt, will revisit London early in the approaching spring. Forty-five years have elapsed, I believe, since last he set foot on English soil, the acknowledged prince of pianists at that time living. Musical society in this metropolis was not then sufficiently enlightened or emancipated from prejudice to appreciate at their full value and significance his splendid innovations in connection with the *technique* of pianism, which startled our Conservative dilettanti, and evoked a tempest of adverse criticism from professional *laudatores temporis acti*. From a pecuniary point of view his successive performances at the Philharmonic Concerts were less successful than his *impresario* for the time being had expected them to be; and it is said that, on discovering this to be the case, he generously insisted upon indemnifying the *impresa* for the loss it had sustained through its miscalculation. The coolness of his reception here—which was the more disagreeably surprising to him, because he had theretofore carried all before him in every Continental city in which he had played—indisposed him to repeat an experiment which had been fraught with disappointment and mortification to him. Hence, his steadfast reluctance, adhered to throughout so many years, to return to London, where—like his son-in-law, Wagner, at a later date—he had felt himself to be a “*génie incompris*.” No musician living, not even Charles Gounod or Giuseppe Verdi, has been the object of such fervent hero-worship or passionate personal adoration as Féreñcz Liszt. Vienna, Paris, Rome, Berlin, St. Petersburg and many another great Continental city have been at his feet any time throughout the past half-century whenever he honoured them with a visit. During his long residence in Weimar, where he created the musical “School of the Future,” and taught Germany how operas should be produced and performed, he was surrounded by men and women of social and intellectual distinction whose admiration and love for him knew no bounds. *Grandes dames de par le monde* courted his smiles, and trembled at his frowns: it is related of a beautiful German Countess (still living) that she picked up a cigar-end he threw away one day, and had it set in a diamond locket, which she thereafter wore on her bosom, dispensing a faint reek of stale tobacco for which her family and friends were at a loss to account, until accident revealed its origin. Every sort of distinction and honour has been lavished on Canon Liszt by the mightiest potentates of the Continent. Emperors and Kings have conferred upon him their most exalted Orders of Chivalry; he is a Privy Councillor of one German Grand-Duchy, and an Aulic Councillor of another; mere wealth has been his ever since the days of his early manhood, and he has spent as much money in noble works of

charity, and in the encouragement of struggling musical artists, as would constitute half-a-dozen handsome fortunes. Now that he has at length been induced to revisit this vast city—in which the cultivation of musical knowledge and taste has undergone incredible development since the date of his last appearance amongst us—it is to be hoped that he will encounter a welcome worthy of him; for, after all, he is not only one of the most remarkable composers of the century, and the greatest pianist of all time past and present, but a profound thinker, generous philanthropist, and high-minded, chivalrous gentleman. I can imagine the joy which his presence here will occasion to his accomplished pupil and faithful disciple, Mr. Walter Bache, who has done so much to make Liszt's compositions known to the English musical public. Another of his favourite *alumni*, Leonhard Bach, the admirable pianist who has recently taken up his abode in the “pays des brouillards,” will give a grand orchestral and choral concert in the Canon's honour on April 9 at St. James's Hall. The programme will, of course, be exclusively composed of Liszt's works, amongst those selected for performance (with his approval) being his superb E flat concerto, Hungarian Fantasia, and Polonaise in E major, all written for the pianoforte with orchestral accompaniments. The *soli* will be rendered by the concert-giver, whose magnificent interpretations of his great master's compositions have already established his reputation as a virtuoso of the very “first flight” in this country, as well as in the Fatherland. Leonhard Bach is one of the few pianists living who can play Liszt's P.F. music as its composer meant it to be played when he wrote it; that is to say, with a complete mastery over its technical difficulties, surpassing though they be, that enables the executant to devote his whole intellectual faculty and passionnal force to the interpretation of the tone-poet's inspirations. Such gifts as those of Herr Bach would in themselves suffice to render the concert in question eminently attractive to music-lovers; but a still deeper interest will be imparted to it by the circumstance that Liszt will be present on the occasion, and may, as I am assured, even consent to conduct one of the principal numbers. He has, moreover, promised to assist at all the preliminary rehearsals. *Avis aux lecteurs; et au bon entendeur, salut!*

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Pleasant tidings have reached me from three dear friends in lands far away beyond the sea, one and all *prime donne*, earning fresh laurels and reaping golden harvests beneath wintry skies. Before Adelina Patti quitted Vienna for Bucharest, she appeared at the Hofoper, by special request of the Emperor Francis Joseph, in her favourite part of *Violetta (Traviata)*. “Hohe Preise” was put up for the occasion, and no less a sum than £1,400 was taken—an amount for the receipt of which in one evening there is no precedent in the annals of the Vienna Opera House. The Queen of Song received, amongst other tributes of public admiration, thirty wreaths—one, from the Emperor, was executed in the precious metals—scores of bouquets, and a massive silver table-service from Crown-Prince Rudolph. On her arrival in Bucharest she was received at the railway station by the Intendant of the Royal Theatre and a

deputation representing the leading journals of the Roumanian capital. A torchlight procession of Boyars in sledges escorted her to the Hôtel du Boulevard, in which a splendid suite of rooms had been retained for her use. Madame Patti had been favoured by Prince Jón Ghica, the Roumanian Minister at the Court of St. James, with especial credentials to the gifted Queen Elizabeth, herself no less accomplished a musician than graceful a poet ; the Diva's *début* in Roumanian society took place, therefore, under the most brilliant auspices imaginable. Every seat in the huge opera house was occupied on the occasion of her first appearance, the cheapest places (those in the second gallery) fetching ten francs apiece. Having never until this year had an opportunity of seeing and hearing Mdme. Patti in the flesh, Bucharest has lashed out into reckless expenditure ; but the Roumanians are passionately fond of music, and will deem their money well spent for such a treat as Adelina's singing. Whilst singing the mad scene in Lucca, she displayed a courage and presence of mind that averted a serious catastrophe. One of the "gods," leaning over from the slips to peep at her, fell into the stalls ; whereupon a cry of "fire" was set up by some fools, and the audience rose in great alarm and agitation. The orchestra, moreover, came to a full stop. Madame Patti at once advanced to the footlights exclaiming, "Mais allez-donc, vogons !" to the conductor, who resumed his *bâtau*, and recommenced where he had left off. The audience, after having cheered Adelina to the echo for her timely *sang froid*, sat down reassured, and the performance was duly continued to its natural close. On the 7th ult., Marcella Sembrich achieved a signal triumph in unenthusiastic Berlin, where she gave a concert at the Singakademie—the *habitués* of which establishment are uncommonly difficult to please, as many an excellent vocalist has discovered ere now, to his or her poignant mortification—and was recalled twenty-one several times in the course of the evening. Since the palmy days of Pauline Lucca's unexampled popularity in "Athens on the Spree," I can recall to mind no instance of so vivacious a display of enthusiasm in a Berlin concert room. But it is scarcely to be wondered at that the musical Berlinese, after a long course of Frau von Voggenhuber and Fraeulein Lehmann—meritorious artistes enough, but dramatic rather than vocal—should be roused from their accustomed lethargy by the brilliant vocalisation and perfect intonation of Marcella Sembrich. Not only is this excellent artiste a polyglot—like Adelina Patti, Christine Nilsson, and Minnie Hauk—capable of sustaining a number of operatic parts in four or five languages, but a pianist entitled to rank in the same category as Annette Essipoff and Sophie Menter, and one of the few violinists of my acquaintance to whose solo-playing I can listen with unalloyed pleasure. In the possession of these accomplishments she is unique amongst the "leading ladies" of the operatic stage. I know of none other whose pianism is of a quality justifying her in attempting any enterprise on the keyboard more formidable than a "tumtitum" accompaniment to a ballad or Volkslied, or who is capable of playing a diatonic scale upon the violin. Madame de Wartegg's many friends and countless admirers in this country will be

glad to know that her impersonation of Manon has proved as splendid a success in the United States as it did in Prague, where she "created" the *role* so admirably rendered in London last season by Madame Rôze-Mapleson. I hear that her voice, during her recent tour through America, has revealed even more than its usual richness of tone and flexibility, and that her Manon is accounted no less masterly a performance than her Carmen, which part she has also been playing to crowded houses. It is at present her intention to return to Europe early in the approaching spring, and to spend a part of the season in London; I hope we may have an opportunity of hearing her in some of her favourite dramatic parts—notably in that of Katharine, in Goetz's "Taming of the Shrew," an opera that I believe will one of these days become extremely popular in this country. No German *prima donna*—and they have all tried their hands at it—has hitherto succeeded in impersonating "curst Kate" as forcibly, archly, and tunefully as has that versatile American actress and songstress, Minnie Hauk.

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During the Christmas holidays London enjoyed a brief respite from the plague of concerts with which, of late years, her winters as well as her summers have come to be vexed. Dearly as I love good music, I have often wondered how anyone, save under such compulsion as that suffered by the professional critic, can be induced to attend concerts in this metropolis during the months of December, January, and February. The distances are so great, the weather, as a rule, is so hideous, the dangers of "catching your death" by incurring the sudden contrasts of temperature afforded by a stuffy, over-heated concert-room and an east-windy, ice-cold street are so imminent and deadly, that the typical Londoner's passion for what he or she looks upon as amusement must indeed be a devouring one to impel thousands of well-to-do people nightly to quit their comfortable homes, incur considerable physical inconvenience and pecuniary outlay, injure their health and risk their lives, in order to put in an appearance at a "Pop," or a Ballad-Concert, or a P. F. Recital. The fact that Londoners will brave hybernal blasts for the sake of a symphony or song—considering how complete the consensus of Continental opinion is that we are not a musical people—is scarcely less surprising than the circumstance that persons residing in the N. W. Postal District, and not accounted insane by their relatives and friends, actually travel to Sydenham in mid-winter in order to see a pantomime, and to Battersea for the purpose of contemplating a "variety show." *Es muss auch solche Käuze geben*; doubtless, whatever is, is right. As soon as Twelfth Night had been dismissed to its ancestors—in great splendour by Augustus Harris, whose Epiphanalian entertainment to his friends and "the profession" was one of the gayest and most tasteful festivities I have ever attended—the customary functions at St. James's Hall resumed their interrupted course, despite the atrocious state of Regent Street, left to welter in frozen filth for a whole week by an imbecile vestry. Vladimir de Pachmann's amazing *technique* proved no less attractive in winter than in summer-time; the scene of his last year's triumphs has been thronged

this year every time he has given a Recital, and his highly-finished renderings of Chopin and Henselt have repeatedly stirred great audiences to genuine enthusiasm, though every second person in the room was suffering from some form of influenza or bronchitis. With the exception of his reappearance, no musical "event" of any abnormal moment came off during the month of January. It was a period of comparative peacefulness; concert-givers had ceased from troubling and pianists were at rest.

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Of a recently published Treatise on Harmony by that erudite musician, Mr. E. Silas, I may say that it is equally remarkable for its lucidity and compendiousness. The author, in dealing with a science rendered formidable by its exuberance of *termina technica*, has spared no pains to make "the crooked straight and the rough places plain." He has altogether discarded that archaic system of musical shorthand known by the name of "Figured Bass," fruitful in headaches and despair to earnest students without number. As he explains, it had its use "when the conductor of an orchestra had to fill up a meagre score with chords played on a harpsichord or an organ; but, unfortunately, a system of harmony was founded on it, which brought forth a confusion and complication similar to the result which would ensue if grammar were founded on shorthand, instead of the latter on the former." The sections dealing with "Chords," "Pedal Bass," and "Modulations of the First and Second Order" are luminously though very tersely written, and teem with well-chosen illustrations of the rules they ably set forth. On the whole, this little book is one that independent students will find invaluable, as facilitating their insight into the *rationale* of musical science; whilst teachers of harmony may with advantage take many of its hints in the direction of importing simplicity of diction and clearness of exposition into their methods of conveying knowledge to their pupils. The work, a cheap one, is published by Weekes and Co., of Hanover Street, and I can conscientiously recommend it to the attention of musicians *in esse atque in posse*.

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On the 7th of last month an anniversary of great musical interest to the influential Wagner associations of Northern Germany, and, indeed, to all German musicians, was celebrated in the Royal Opera House of Berlin. It was in that stately theatre that, exactly thirty years ago, the great Saxon master's heroic opera *Tannhaeuser* had been produced for the first time on the Prussian stage, with a cast that Herr von Huelsen would in vain endeavour to match at the present date by the most carefully selected draft from his stock company, either as regards individual talent or general efficiency. With Theodore Formes as the Minstrel Knight, Johanna Wagner as Elisabeth, the Herrenburg-Tuczek as Venus, Radwaner as Wolfram, and Bost as the Landgrave—all the minor characters, moreover, being filled by thoroughly efficient artistes—the *première* of *Tannhaeuser* was the great event of the 1856 musical season in the northern Athens, and created a sensation in Conservative as well as

Progressist art-côteries that had not been equalled in force and intensity since the production of Weber's *Freyschuetz*, about a quarter of a century previously, had set the Berlin Classicists and Romanticists by the ears. The peace of families was disturbed, and old friendships were broken up, by the bitter controversies that raged for several successive weeks after the first performance of *Tannhaeuser* in the "King's Theatre"; but the general public of Berlin pronounced itself so conclusively in favour of the startling novelty by deluging the administration of the Hofoper with applications "prænumerando," as the quaint old Prussian official vocabulary hath it, for tickets wherewith to attend subsequent repetitions of *Tannhaeuser*, that the Intendant-General wisely put it up again and again. As a matter of fact, the work was repeated no fewer than twenty times within the ensuing twelvemonth, and invariably drew crowded houses. Freick and Salomon, both of whom are still active members of the operatic staff at Berlin, though long since entitled to service-pensions, were introduced to the public of the Opera House towards the end of May, 1856, in the respective parts of the Landgrave and Biterolf. Since that memorable year the title rôle has been sustained in Berlin by Brandes, Ferenczy, Zottmayr, Hoffmann, Bachmann, Schmid, Hagen, Richard, Kaminski, and Albert Niemann; that of Elisabeth by Storck, Nimbs, Mik, Boerner, Pauingartner, Carl, Pessiak, Mallinger, Voggenhuber, and Hofmeister. Fricke and Salomon are the only survivors of the vocal artistes belonging to the Royal Opera Company in the Prussian capita, at the time of the first *Tannhaeuser* production. All the others have joined the majority. *Sit illis terra levis!*

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The recent imprisonment of Rita de Candia, one of the three daughters of Mario and Grisi, for "unjustifiable indebtedness" at Berlin has given occasion to the publication, by a French contemporary, of some curious and highly interesting reminiscences of those inimitable artistes. It appears that Rita at her trial pleaded in palliation of her spendthriftiness that she had never been taught the value of money, and was ignorant of the very elements of arithmetic. In this respect she was her father's own child. Poor Mario, after earning half-a-dozen princely fortunes, died a pauper in Rome, leaving nothing to his children but the memory of his triumphs. How could it be otherwise? At one and the same time, when in the zenith of his popularity, he kept up a house in the Champs Elysées, a villa in London, another in Brighton, and a palace in Florence, each with its full staff of servants; money slipped through his fingers like water; he lent large sums to innumerable acquaintances, kept open house, and maintained a score of parasites who spoke ill of him behind his back. He never allowed Grisi to contribute to his household expenses; whatever she earned was to be set aside for the dowries of the three girls. Mario's views of life were those of an Oriental prince. There was always a place at his table for whomsoever chose to occupy it; when dinner was announced by the major domo, Mario invariably conducted Grisi to the head of the table with his own hand, and drank his first glass of wine to her health. . . . . He never read letters or

business communications, and more than once allowed legal proceedings taken against him by his creditors to run their course without paying the least attention to them, his property being seized and sold by auction for a tenth of its value when he might have saved it by the exercise of a little ordinary care and prudence. Compared to him, Grisi was a model of exactitude. She rose early every morning, and devoted some hours to her children, whom she certainly did her best to bring up in the way they should go. But the greater part of her time was daily occupied at her toilette, and in making experiments with a view to the preservation of her beauty. She kept her three maids all day long hard at work dressing and undressing her till they were ready to drop with fatigue. Every morning during the summer months a huge bowl of wild strawberries was brought to her; with handfuls of the fresh fruit she would smear her face, neck, and hands over and over again to impart softness and lustre to the skin. Milk of almonds was her favourite beverage. Until dinner-time she was always dressed in white; at dinner she generally wore a low-necked gown of black velvet, and twelve rows of Oriental pearls round her throat. All her fingers were laden with diamond rings, and she often wore half-a-dozen watches at a time. She adored her husband, and was madly jealous of him; indeed, it was jealousy that caused her death. Mario was fulfilling an engagement in St. Petersburg—she being at Florence at the time—when she received a letter from a female friend informing her that a noble young Russian lady had fallen desperately in love with him, and was about to forsake her family to live with the Count de Candia. Grisi was ailing when these terrible tidings reached her; but, despite the unfavourable state of her health, she started at once for St. Petersburg, and got as far as Vienna, where she was compelled by sheer suffering to take to her bed. Her attendants telegraphed to Mario, who left the Russian capital immediately, and travelled by day and by night to Vienna, only to find his beloved Giulia a corpse. She expired a few hours before his arrival. His despair at losing her found expression in the wildest extravagance of outlay in connection with her funeral. The bier on which her coffin rested was made of carved oak and rock crystal, and cost £800; the lid of the coffin was a sheet of plate glass, through which the dead songstress, clad in white satin, and adorned with all her diamonds, could be seen lying in state for days before her burial. Mario retired from the stage soon after her death, divided her property equally amongst her three daughters—two of whom married well, whilst the third, Rita, fell into bad hands, and committed follies without number, the latest of which she is now expiating in a Prussian gaol—and dragged on a few years of poverty at Rome. Of all the wealth he had once possessed he left barely enough behind him at his death to pay the expenses of his interment. But few monarchs have been so sincerely and universally mourned as was this gentle, generous, gifted Mario de Candia.

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Amongst the musical novelties that have reached me since the commencement of the year are several new songs and dances published by

Mr. Joseph Williams, of Berners Street. In one of the former Mr. Byron Webber supplies a spirited exponente of the "Greater Britain" theory. The sentiments he sets forth are unexceptional, from a patriotic point of view, but the language in which they are expressed, though vigorous and racy, is more than once deformed by careless construction, rendering its meaning obscure. There are, however, genuine elements of popularity in "Hands Across the Sea," not the least important of which is Mr. Florian Pascal's melodious setting of Mr. Webber's stirring words. The song will assuredly be received with favour in convivial places of musical entertainment. "Hearts Ever True" (words by Leon Desmond, music by T. A. Barrett) is a good love song of the class which pleads the tender passion alternately in common and  $\frac{3}{4}$  time. It is just now the fashion that Eros should open his case, so to speak, at the rate of four crotchets to the bar, and break out into a waltz measure when addressing the jury. The initial phrase of "Hearts Ever True" reminds me of "Shells of the Ocean," and I would rather dance to its second subject than sing it. But it is a good little song for all that, and may do well if fully advertised! "Fife and Drum," by Bingham and Champion, is a pot-boiler in three keys. With fine generosity, its authors point out in a foot note that "no permission (is) necessary for (!) singing this at public or private concerts." This announcement, though couched in curiously elliptical English, should be fraught with keen and abiding joy to professional vocalists. "Truthful Tom" (Weatherly and Pascal) is verbally and musically humorous, thereby distinguishing itself very agreeably from the vast majority of modern comic songs. Its words propound the adventures of a great and gifted liar; its tune is really a tune, provided with a refrain easily convertible into a hearty chorus. Country entertainers will do well to dovetail this cheery ballad into their programmes. I cannot conscientiously say as much of another of Messrs. Weatherly and Pascal's joint productions, which professes to be "A Capital Tale," but signally fails to fulfil the promise of its title. It exemplifies the "Quos ego. . ." method of inference in three several instances; but where does the fun come in? "The Gate Immortal" (Bingham and Champion) is a lugubrious solo-anthem for the drawing-room. It may be sung with a severely depressing effect in serious families on Sunday evenings. I will warrant it to banish cheerfulness, for the time being, from the breasts of singer and hearer alike. "Fedora" is a lively polka by Mr. Percy Irwynne; the "Blue-coat Boy Polka" has an uncommonly pretty title page, representing a party of Christ's Hospitallers engaged in a lively snowballing match. They all have elegant busts and slender waists, a pleasing anachronism at which Mr. Henry Irving is sweetly smiling as he lolls on a rustic bench under a Christmas tree. Another waltz, introducing "popular subjects" from "The Vicar of Wideawakefield," is enriched by a capital portrait of Miss Violet Terriss or Mr. William Cameron—which is it? From the Music Publishing Company in Great Marlborough Street I have received a really charming waltz by Mr. Hugh Clifford. It is called "Olivia," dedicated to Ellen Terry, and adorned by a graceful "counterfeit presentment" of that inimitable artiste. "Olivia" will be

heard in many a ball-room during the fashionable season to come; I should not wonder if it achieve the honours of the barrel-organ.

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I extract the following anecdote from an amusing letter lately received from a musical correspondent in Vienna. "Not long ago, at Pressburg, four celebrated personages dined together *en partie carrière* at the famous old Green Tree, where cooking is good, and wine is old. Their names were Annette Essipoff, Franz Liszt, Anton Rubinstein, and Johannes Brahms. After dinner, Madame Essipoff withdrew into a salon adjoining the dining room, where there was an excellent grand piano, at which she took her seat, and extemporised in the most delightful manner for about half an hour, whilst the three *maestri* regaled themselves with coffee and cigars. As she returned into the dining room, she exclaimed with well-affected solemnity, 'Behold the great Triumvirate!' 'Triumvirate!' rejoined Rubinstein, with a sardonic grin, 'that is rather a doubtful compliment; at least, to one of us. Liszt is Cæsar, of course; at a pinch, I may pass for Mark Antony; what will Brahms say, however, to being cast for the part of Lepidus?' Madame Essipoff replied, 'You must arrange that amongst yourselves; let him whom the cap fits wear it. But I must have a lock of each triumvir's hair for a bracelet, which I shall evermore wear in commemoration of this splendid conjunction of planets.' Obedient to her decree, Liszt and Rubinstein bowed their stately heads to the scissors, with which she deftly snipped away a couple of locks. Then came the turn of Brahms; but he would by no means consent to beshorn of his 'capillary attractions,' and a comic struggle ensued, in the course of which Madame Essipoff unluckily scratched the great composer's thumb somewhat severely with the point of her scissors. As soon as she saw what she had done, she laid her lips to the wound, after the manner of Queen Eleanor of old; whereupon Liszt exclaimed, in a sepulchral voice, 'Beware! Whosoever shall drink of this blood will receive the terrible gift of ability to understand Hanslick's articles!' It may be mentioned for the enlightenment of our countrymen that Edward Hanslick, the first of living musical critics, is an enthusiastic admirer of Brahms' music, and has steadfastly written it up for many a year past."

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English dramatic tenors worth listening to may be reckoned upon the fingers of one hand, leaving out the thumb. Baritones—good ones, too—are plentiful in this country; of bass singers, profound and otherwise, there is no lack. But a pure tenor voice, of good quality and possessed by a man whom Nature has furthermore endowed with a musical ear, is so rare a product of these isles that its importance can hardly be appraised too highly by the British public at large. This is why the premature death of Mr. Joseph Maas, in the prime of life and fulness of vocal power, must be accounted a national calamity. It is, moreover, a misfortune not remediable in the immediate future. In one, at least, of the lamented artistes "lines" of singing—the operatic—no living *primo tenore* is

qualified to replace him. Losing Mr. Maas, the Cari Rosa Company, upon which English music-lovers are nowadays to so great an extent dependent for a particular class of their favourite recreation, is bereft of one of its main-stays. Nearly nine years had elapsed between the date of his first connection with that excellent institution—for it is no less—and that of his most untimely decease. During the interval his position in public favour steadily advanced, year after year, in right of his unremitting and successful efforts to attain perfection in his art, until he had reached the very summit of popularity, and was become invaluable to his *impresario* as an attraction of the first rank. From this enviable, and, in his case, well-merited station, he has been struck down by the remorseless hand of Fate, just when the burden and heat of the day had been surmounted; when the rewards of persevering industry were pouring in; when, in a word, life was most satisfactory, most enjoyable, most precious. A more tragical ending to a bright and useful career is not within my remembrance. It will scarcely bear thinking of. Joseph Maas was a most amiable, single-hearted man; honest, affectionate, generous; a devoted husband and father, a staunch friend, a kindly colleague to his fellow-workers, and a faithful servant to the public. His lot was cast in places bristling with sharp envies and keen-edged jealousies, but his sweet temper and genuine kindness had power to blunt them all, at least, as far as he was personally concerned. No member of the musical profession could have been snatched away thus suddenly whose loss would have been more deeply felt and sincerely mourned by his or her associates. That such a life as his should have been sacrificed to a passion for sport is a painful anomaly. Maas was an assiduous fisherman, and no climatic intemperance could deter him from indulging in his favourite pastime whenever opportunity offered. It was impossible to make him understand that a tenor singer, of all men living, was the least justified in practising an amusement rendering wettings and chills unavoidable. During his last engagement at Birmingham, just before Christmas, he went fishing in bitter weather, and returned to London suffering from acute rheumatism, which soon passed into the fever stage, and eventually killed him. It avails nothing now to conjecture what might have been, had he listened to the voice of those who loved him. We can only mourn for our dead friend, and pay our humble tribute of love and honour to his memory.

WM. BEATTY-KINGSTON.



## Our Play=Box.

### “NADJEZDA.”

A Play, in a Prologue and Three Acts, by MAURICE BARRYMORE. Produced at the Haymarke Theatre, on Saturday, Jan. 2, 1886.

Characters in the Prologue:—

Nadjezda ... ... ... ...	MISS EMILY RIGL.	Janoush ... ... ... ...	MR. ROBERT PATEMAN.
Praxeda ... ... ... ...	MISS LYDIA FOOTE.	Khorvitch ... ... ... ...	MR. MACKINTOSH.

Characters in the Play:—

Prince Zabouroff ... ...	MR. H. BEERBOHM-TREE.	Janoush ... ... ... ...	MR. ROBERT PATEMAN.
Khorvitch (under the name of “Baron Barsch”)	MR. MACKINTOSH.	The Hon. Dennis O’Hara.	MR. FORBES DAWSON.
Lord Alsager ... ...	MR. EDMUND MAURICE.	Eureka Grubb... ... ...	MISS GEORGINA DREW.
Paul Devereux... ...	MR. MAURICE BARRYMORE	Nadine ... ... ... ...	MISS EMILY RIGL.

The traditions of the Haymarket Theatre, and the very *genius loci* seem to indicate that comedy should be its main attraction. It might be fairly expected to increase, if not “the gaiety of nations”—the gaiety of that *debonnaire* district. Under the new *régime*, however, melodrama of the most sombre cast has been offered—and, it must be said, with discouraging results—as food for the jaded appetites of the West End, and the gloomy horrors of “Dark Days” and “Nadjezda,” failing to excite or terrify, prove that combination of dagger, bowl, and revolver of the “wicked baronet” or lordly seducer have either lost their magic or are grown too familiar from repetition to have effect. A bright comedy from the French—a prescription from the hand of the Gull or Jenner of the dramatic faculty—say by Dr. Pinero—would probably now restore the patient to health.

“Nadjezda” is a story of Russian villainy set out with all the direct plainness of modern Zolaism, which is, in truth, little more than the old principle of “calling a spade a spade.” Many hard sayings have been used in reference to this piece—“revolting,” “disgusting,” &c.—but it is only fair to say that the author seems to have approached his task in a well-meaning spirit, akin to that in which he might have attempted to deal with the story of Lucretia. But such a subject would require the most delicate touching, and should be indicated rather than touched, and then, perhaps, like the famous cucumber preparation, be “thrown away.” This sapping full of horrors is, after all, a gruesome form of entertainment, and never really attracts audiences. The sufferings of the victims are regarded with indifference—at most with curiosity; as some Pasteur looks on at the quivering nerve of the animal he is vivisecting. The story is simply this:—To save her husband’s life, compromised in one of the innumerable Russian plots, Nihilist or otherwise, his wife consents to sacrifice herself to the wishes of an infamous Governor, named Zabouroff. His mode of his executing his portion of the bargain is by sending the body of the husband on a bier to the lady’s house. Her



"Our trade falls heavily upon these feeble folk."

NADJEZDA,

Maurice Barrymore

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little child, who is present at the distraction of this scene, grows up, and, through various successive acts, takes on herself the duty of avenger by captivating the atrocious Governor, entangling him in her toils, and finally stabbing him to the heart. Such is the outline; but the whole is crudely worked out, for "force," unless under restraint, is often apt to be "coarse." One of the sensations of the day, or rather the hour (for we must now economise our time in emotion), was the rude and angry reception the piece encountered on the first night. The first act, or prologue, was well received, and, in spite of a repulsive situation, seemed to promise an involved train of complicated horrors. It was here that Miss Rigl, a new and foreign actress, made much impression, showing clearly that some embers at least of the "sacred fire" were glowing within, though a strange hysterical laugh too often introduced, both *mal* and *hors de propos*, caused misgivings. The rest of the play did not answer this promise, and many incoherent portions became so many challenges for the jeers and scoffs of the evil-minded. A lively controversy arose in the papers as to the limits of this form of disapproval. Mr. Gilbert contributed a letter in which he suggested that the audience should, as it were, wire down their hostility till the act was over, and then let the cork fly'out, which seems a little Utopian, as it assumes a measure of judicious self-control not found in a popular audience. And who is to secure this "bottling up," for the jeerers enjoy their cruel pastime with the keenest relish? "Sport to them, death to us." Nothing, indeed, is so painful as to see a cultivated woman thus baited, and there should at least be some distinction made between the play and its interpreter. It would not be difficult to distinguish judicially between the right of disapproval and rude interruption. The latter surely is within the province of the police of the house. But then, what director would incur the odium, the confusion, shuffling, &c., of removal of offenders, possibly causing a feud between him and his audience that may be maintained for years. He will be certain to feel their vengeance on the production of his next new play.

Miss Rigl has genuine power as a romantic actress, and, wit moreh restraint and in a sympathetic character—such as "Frou-Frou"—would be highly effective. On the succeeding nights the indistinctness complained of in her utterance, owing to a natural nervousness, disappeared. Another actress, Miss Drew, played an American lady in a fashion which seemed to be unacceptable, but which under other conditions would have seemed original enough, and amusing. It could be classed fairly enough with such eccentricities as Dundreary. Mr. Beerbohm Tree has received much praise for his "character-part" as the scoundrel Russian, and deservedly, though there is a danger of he and Mr. Brookfield falling into the same line, viz., of training their voice and gestures to the "mincing" movements of old age. Much sympathy is due to the new lessees—Mr. Bashford and Mr. Russell—who must not be discouraged. With a spirited comedy, *tout peut se rétablir*.

PERCY FITZGERALD.

## Our Omnibus=Box.

Mr. John Coleman has put on record his "Memoirs of Samuel Phelps" (Remington), the fine old actor who so worthily sustained the best traditions of the English stage between the death of Macready and the advent of the influence of Henry Irving. Playgoers of two generations at least will greedily devour the pages of Mr. Coleman's book. Macreadyites will here find many a faded recollection, and it will be eagerly studied by many who first drank of the dramatic spring of poetry in the old pit of Sadler's Wells Theatre during the famous management of Phelps and Greenwood. The book is rather anecdotal than critical, but we all know that when Mr. Coleman does give his opinion on actors, authors, or journalists he is not nicely mouthed. Accidentally, no doubt, some of the stories and conversations recorded here leave behind them an undeserved sting. Charles Fechter was certainly not the bumptuous mountebank he is here represented to be, and he was certainly a better actor than Mr. Coleman asserts he was. It would be interesting to know what English actor of his time could approach him in stage love-making, its earnestness, its grace, its fervour, or its intensity, or what melodramatic performance of the last five-and-twenty years could compare with Fechter's *Ruy Blas*. It is all very well to sneer at Fechter, but with all his faults and eccentricities he was the first to register a protest against the mouthing, roaring, ranting school of tragedian, the blatant, swaggering, self-conscious impostors, who all considered they were Macreadys or Phelps's, because they had caught the rough edges of their pronounced manner. No one can have forgotten the howl of execration that greeted Fechter and his revivalism. He pioneered the renaissances of natural art as compared to bellowing Bulls of Bashan, who split our ears and murdered the text of Shakespeare. But, thank goodness, Fechter was not hounded out of the country, or hissed off our boards as some of his countrymen had been before him. He was accepted for what he was worth. Protection in its worst form was at an end. We studied the greatest French, German, and Italian actors, imitating what was good in their art, and rejecting what was bad. Some day it will have to be pointed out what an important influence Fechter had on that measure of stage reform that is felt to-day and almost universally prevails. The rubbish about "taking the bread out of the mouth of the poor English actor was exploded before the year 1867, and mainly owing to the man whose career in this country receives little else but a few gratuitous sneers. "Fechter, who had feminine proclivities, and was as hysterical as a woman, was

taken suddenly ill with an attack of the spleen, which caused the epigastrium to swell out into abnormal dimensions ; hence he collapsed at the end of the second act." And all this because he had dared to play Hamlet ! It is a pity that a volume so full of facts intermingled with its fancies should not have been carefully indexed. Some of the play bills and notes from diaries are very valuable. No one will care to have it remembered of dear old Mr. Chippendale that he had never heard when he was playing at the Haymarket Theatre of Phelps, or of the Princess's Theatre ! Surely the good fellows at the Court must have been chaffing Mr. Coleman that evening ; but the events of several dramatic seasons in which Phelps figured are most interesting. We all know Mr. Coleman to be a most loyal defender of his profession, and as a doughty champion he has often broken a lance in favour of the misjudged actor. We may hope, therefore, that his book will not fall into the hands of the over cynical or contemptuous, for pages more full of oaths have scarcely ever been presented to the public. Every actor seems to interlard his conversation with a " by G—!" or a hearty " d—n !" Macready and Phelps never appear to speak without an oath.

" The d—l you do," growled Phelps ; " well, d—n your impudence ! "

On the other hand, as he got into his cab, Phelps growled—

" After all, John, he's not a bad fellow for a Frenchman, but by G— he can't act Shakespeare ! "

" That be d—d, sir," roared Macready, as I turned to leave the room. " Who said that you were to go to jail, or your wife and children to — ? Don't talk stuff and nonsense."

Here is another pretty anecdote to delight the scoffers of the stage :—

" As to Macduff, I don't know how often I have played him ; I think every Monday night during the season. Of course you've heard of the row during the fight. ' Mac ' let fly at me, nearly giving me a crack on the head, as he growled—

" ' D—n your eyes ! take that ! '

" For the moment I was flabbergasted, but when he returned to the charge I gave him a dose of his own physic (adding to the oath not only his eyes, but his limbs too !). He returned the compliment by heaping maledictions on my seed, breed, and generation. Then he ' went ' for me, and I ' went ' for him, and there we were growling at each other like a pair of wild beasts, until I finished him, amidst a furore of applause.

" The audience were quite carried away by the ' cunning of the scene,' and shouted themselves hoarse, roaring on the one side, ' Well done, ' Mac ' ! on the other, ' Let him have it, Phelps ! '

" When the curtain fell I gave him my hand to get up. He was puffing and blowing like a grampus.

" As soon as he could recover his wind he commenced—

" ' Er-er-r, Mr. Phelps. what did you mean by making use of that extraordinary language to me ? '

" ' What did you mean, Mr. Macready, by making use of such extraordinary language to me ? '

" ' I, sir ? '

" ' Yes, you, sir ! You d—d my eyes ? '

"‘ And you sir, d—d my limbs ! ’

"‘ I could do no less than follow so good an example.’

"With this the absurdity of the thing struck us both, and we burst out laughing."

After such flowers of speech who wonders that the "growlers and roarers" were imitated in turn? We have changed all that. We don't believe Henry Irving's vocabulary will be illustrated by a single damn!

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In February, 1885, about a dozen young actors and actresses—most of them junior members of Mr. Wilson Barrett's Company—formed themselves, in a quiet, unassuming way, into a society for promoting the study of dramatic literature, and obtaining increased practice in their art. In the course of a twelvemonth, the Society of Dramatic Students has grown to be an acknowledged institution, and was even alluded to by the Professor of English Literature in his last lecture before the University of Cambridge as "one of the most encouraging signs which dramatic literature is making in our day." This young and vigorous Society has, in the course of its first year's existence, given three *matinées* in London, namely :—

"The Two Gentlemen of Verona" (Vaudeville), 19th June, 1885.

Charles Lamb's farce, "Mr. H."      { (Gaiety), 27th October, 1885.  
Douglas Jerrold's "Housekeeper"      }

Dryden's "Secret Love" (Court), 19th January, 1886.

At these performances, not only was every actor a "Dramatic Student," and every super, too—for it is a rule that "all who are not cast for speaking parts must assist otherwise on the stage if required"—but the stage manager and the acting manager, also; in fact, all the multifarious business which a *matinée* involves is undertaken by the officers of the Society. That the plays revived have borne out the avowed intention "to produce the best plays in the English language, especially those little known to the stage," may fairly be claimed. Shakespeare's comedy had not seen the light in London since Davenport opened the Olympic Theatre thirty years ago; Lamb's exquisite farce, which was a stock piece for many years in Philadelphia, had never been revived in London (except by amateurs) since its fatal first night on Wednesday, 10th December, 1806; while Dryden's "Secret Love"—albeit the best specimen of high comedy by the best poet of the Restoration period—had only been played once since its production in 1667, and that was at Mr. Cross's benefit in 1706. In choosing to represent the neglected works of great authors, rather than well-known acting-plays, the "Dramatic Students" have avoided all odious comparisons with their seniors, and have attracted to their performances an unusually literary audience. Even such an untheatrical paper as *Notes and Queries* sent a representative to criticise "Mr. H.," while the Professor of English Literature at University College "cut" his lectures and brought his class to the pit to witness Dryden's comedy

of "Secret Love." But the work of the Society is by no means limited to public performances. There is a General Committee, consisting of three ladies and seven gentlemen, which meets regularly every week to elect new members and discuss any subjects connected with the welfare of the Society. There is a Reading Committee, consisting of one lady and three gentlemen, which carries on its work of research at the British Museum.

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The manner in which new plays are selected is very systematic. First of all the Reading Committee chooses a chronological period, such as "the Drama of the Restoration." After a lengthened study of the plays of this period has been made, and a catalogue of 100 or so likely plays compiled, a final list of four different bills is submitted to the Society in the form of a printed *catalogue raisonné*, containing the casts, abstracts of the plots, and such comments upon the merits of the plays as may be found in the writings of eminent authors. The four from which "Secret Love" was chosen included Congreve's "Way of the World," Steele's "Tender Husband," and Mrs. Centlivre's "Bold Stroke for a Wife." The play is chosen at a General Meeting by ballot of all the members (absent ones forwarding their votes) after an open discussion upon the suitability of the pieces submitted. The stage manager is next elected, and proceeds at once to cut the play, in which task he is assisted and guided by the Reading Committee. As soon as the acting version is prepared the General Committee casts the play, and the Round-Table (or meeting of the cast) is held to read and discuss it. After some fifteen or twenty full rehearsals the play is presented to the public. It is proposed, in order to afford opportunities of practice to those who are not cast, to put in rehearsal (but not to perform publicly) the play which obtains the second largest number of votes. The genius of the Society is work, but the recreation element is not entirely absent. Social meetings held at the houses of the Lady Vice-Presidents form an important part of the scheme. At these popular "five o'clocks," there are songs and music, tea and talk, while occasionally some distinguished visitor will give an arm-chair chat upon some dramatic subject which he has made his own. Before the "Two Gentlemen of Verona" was played Professor Henry Morley discoursed upon this comedy at a "Social" held at Mr. Charles Dickens's. In this fearure of their movement the students have discovered a very practical way of healing the breach between literature and the stage.

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This institution appears to have a future before it in many directions. For instance, there is not—and we believe there never has been—among the learned societies of London a Histrionic Society. Now, the "Dramatic Students" have not only a Reading Committee, whose work we have briefly described, but also Sub-Committees for the investigations of points which arise in connection with costume

and music. Why should not these three sections of the Society embody their researches in printed transactions, and why should not the members read papers before their fellows upon various dramatic subjects which they have especially studied? The Society has already started a theatrical library by means of loans and gifts from its members, and it is hoping soon to have a local habitation as well as a name. If the students continue to prosecute their labours as zealously as they have begun, the day may not be far distant when their institution shall be recognised as a learned body. But if there is a future for the Society in its theoretical aspect, there is no less prospect of its development as a practical school for acting. Arrangements of a private nature have already been made with Mr. Hermann Vezin, Herr Behnke, Capt. Griffiths, and others, by which classes of dramatic students may receive training in various departments of their art at considerably reduced fees, and there is no telling how much this part of the scheme may not be extended in the future. Like the rat at Ispahan, the dramatic students have many friends. Not only have eminent men of letters aided them with their advice, and the critics given them every possible encouragement, but well-known lovers of the drama have offered them monetary aid (which they have, however, refused), and the leading managers have not only lent their names as patrons, and granted the use of their theatres gratuitously for the *matinée* as well as the previous rehearsals, but by their presence in the boxes in goodly numbers they have helped considerably to increase the general interest of the performances. We may add, for the benefit of any young actors and actresses who may be desirous of becoming "Dramatic Students," that anyone who has had a salaried engagement, and has definitely determined to follow the stage as a profession, is eligible for membership, provided he can find two students (one of whom must be a personal friend) to propose and second him. The blackball rule is somewhat severe, for the committee is anxious only to admit such candidates as are likely to prove both valuable and acceptable to the Society, and to exclude both raw recruits who have shown no fitness for their profession, and older actors whose style is already formed, and whose influence would be chilling. There are at present 50 members, and it is somewhat significant of the altered state of theatrical affairs that the hon. treasurer is an old Marlborough captain, and the hon. secretary a former vice-president of the Cambridge Union, while other public school boys and graduates of the Old Universities are enrolled on the list of members.

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On Monday, January 4, previous to the ill-fated "Nadjezda," was produced at the Haymarket a light piece by Mr. Percy Fitzgerald, entitled "Room 70." This seemed to be a revival of the older form of farce, the humour arising out of attempts at getting rid of a compromising beard, which are frustrated by all sorts of awkward *contretemps*. It was acted with much spirit, notably by Mr. Forbes Dawson, the hero of the adventure.

Mr. Frank Lindo gave the first Recital of his third annual series on January 12th at Steinway Hall. Despite the inclemency of the weather, the attendance was good. Miss Cowen was in the audience, and seemed to follow the young reciter with much interest. Mr. Lindo is ambitious, but justifiably so; he has much improved since last year—that is, in serious pieces; in a purely comic vein he is not heard to best advantage. “My First and Last Appearance” and ‘Ferdinando and Elvira’ were not made the most of by him; in such pieces his pronunciation is not so good, and he makes the mistake of appearing amused at what he is relating. Before I forget it, I have a bit of advice to give to Mr. Lindo. His scanning the audience critically and nodding to particular friends when he first appears on the platform is not in good taste, and does not impress the general public in his favour. Now for the good points. Mr. Frank Lindo has a rich sympathetic voice, and much earnestness and feeling. Where pathos is required he is at his best; nor does he lack power, though there is still room for his acquiring more of it; and his conception of serious pieces is generally good. “Only a Mountebank,” by Re Henry, which followed “The Curfew Bell,” was very good and touching. Marc Antony’s speech from “Julius Cæsar” was a trifle hurried, but delivered with much dignity and power. His spirited rendering of Macaulay’s “Virginia” I should pronounce excellent—one of the best interpreted pieces in Mr. Frank Lindo’s repertory but for the assumed voice of Virginius, which is simply grotesque, and entirely out of place. “The Story of Stowaway” (Clement Scott) was good in the beginning and the end, but it rather lacked spirit, and light and shade in the middle. “Rubinstein’s Piano” was very well interpreted, but the reciter still misses the climax; like last year, it was too tame. Mr. Frank Lindo is, I believe, only twenty. He is intelligent and gifted, and if he will bear in mind that perfection is a thing ever to be striven for, and never to be considered as attained, he is on the right road to become one of our best reciters in his line. But he is not gifted with versatility, and I fear will never become a good comic. Mr. Algernon H. Lindo was the pianist, and Mr. Isidore De Lara the vocalist, meeting with his accustomed success. As an encore he gave “Les Myrthes sout Flétris,” a song particularly well suited to him.

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On January 16th, at St. George’s Hall, Carleton D.C. repeated their performance of “The Ladies’ Battle.” The acting gave me no cause to reverse the opinion I expressed last month. Mrs. Conyers d’Arcy had altered her hair, and Miss Findon her dress, for the better, but I must take exception at the quantity of diamonds worn by the young lady. Married women alone wear them in France, and they are unsuited to a child of sixteen in any country. I should also like to suggest to the Countess that it is not very ladylike to stamp one’s

foot so violently, even when angry. This play was preceded by "A Crimeless Criminal," with Mr. J. M. Powell in the chief character. This amusing trifle was fairly acted all round, Miss Knewstub being very good as the old landlady. But I am sorry to notice a great spirit of carelessness which seems to possess the Carleton D.C. of late. The members are seldom sure of their words, and often seem to be thinking of something else than their parts. The Carleton used to be one of the best A.D.C.'s, but they are evidently forgetting that not to progress is to retrograde. Nothing is stationary in art.

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The most remarkable thing about Mr. Derrick's play is that while it pleased the first night audience it has, as far as I have seen, displeased the critics. How is such a discrepancy to be explained? It is a phenomenon of rare occurrence, happily for the critics, for in the theatrical matters above all others the axiom that the *vox populi* is the *vox Dei* holds good, always supposing that a fairly representative section of the public is concerned. The surest way of arriving at a solution of the problem is evidently to take account of one's own impressions of the play in detail, and to recall them as far as possible in the order in which they were experienced. Judging "Plebeians" in this manner, I would describe it as a play that excites curiosity without satisfying it. It holds our attention for the time being, but when examined afterwards in the light of reason it is seen to be radically hollow, and false, as a study of contemporary manners. The true verdict of the public on "Plebeians," I fancy, was to have been gathered, not in the theatre itself, when they were still under the influence of a certain amount of dexterous stage craft, but in the two-penny omnibuses which bore them home to Clapham and Camberwell after reflection had come to their aid. Let me illustrate this thesis briefly. The piece is in three acts. In the first act we are in the rooms of the Hon. Danby Cleeve, which, by the way, appear to be furnished with the cheapest bric-à-brac, and resemble much more a Guilford Street lodging-house than a bachelor's comfortable quarters in Jermyn Street, or one of the Inns. What manner of man is this aristocrat? As embodied by Mr. Thos. Thorne, he is a limp and feeble creature, living under the benevolent despotism of a well-meaning, but tiresome man-servant of the old family retainer type that went out with the Georges. Personally he has nothing in him to interest us, but he receives a succession of strange, and it may be said, interesting visitors. There is first a vulgar, self-made man hailing from Brixton, who describes himself as a retired brewer with a large fortune and a marriageable daughter, and who offers the "honourable" £15,000 if he will condescend to marry this young lady. This is certainly an odd proceeding, but before we have time to realise its absurdity, however, Mr. Basil Brown retires, and another visitor is announced. The new comer is Mr. Israel Ferguson, a flourishing money-lender, who has a more extraordinary mission still, inasmuch as he makes a bid of £20,000 for the honour of Mr. Cleeve's alliance with his daughter. Next comes Miss Wentworth, a confiding young lady, to beg the "honourable," in spite of his being an entire stranger, to obtain informa-

tion for her as to the fate of her *fiancé*, who is overdue at sea; and finally we have a family solicitor, who announces that the tardy mariner has been drowned, and that the "honourable" is heir to his property of £100,000. "My luck is her misfortune," sighs Mr. Danby Cleeve, alluding to the young lady who has just left him, and the act-drop descends. A very curious act is this. It shows us no more human nature than a wax-work containing a set of burlesque figures, but it presents a dramatic combination that we feel we should like to unravel. What is the "honourable" to do under these conflicting circumstances? Is he to marry Miss Belinda Brown with her fifteen thousand pounds, or Miss Miranda Ferguson with her twenty thousand? Is he to console the disappointed bride, whose fortune has been diverted to him, or is he to make ducks-and-drakes of the money, and, somewhat late in the day, take to the sort of life that every right-minded, and blue-blooded bachelor ought to lead?

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Grotesque as the various characters are, the questions they raise occupy our attention more or less, and so we await with patience the development of the story. I am now explaining, be it understood, the attitude of the first-night audience towards the play. In view of the perplexity and uncertainty thrown around the exposition of the subject, I doubt whether any first-night "wrecker" could have had the hardihood at this point to guy the performance. It is necessary to know an author's intentions before we can ridicule them, and, judging by the first act, the most experienced playgoer, I think, could not have hazarded a guess as to Mr. Derrick's probable *dénouement*. It matters little, perhaps, in the long run whether an author puzzles an audience or bores them, both courses being fatal to success; but to be able to keep their judgment in suspense saves him at least from immediate unpleasantness, and that amount of credit may be conceded to the author of "*Plebeians*." In the second act, where the whole of the *dramatis personæ* are assembled under the hospitable roof of Mr. Basil Brown at Candy Lodge, Brixton, Mr. Derrick pursues the same tactics. We never know quite what he is driving at. The Hon. Danby Cleeve appears to be slightly smitten with the charms of Miss Belinda Brown, but, at the same time, he finds Miranda a very sensible girl, and betrays quite a pathetic interest in Miss Wentworth. Some foolish rivalry on the part of the match-making papas does not throw any light on the situation. No! We make up our minds to wait till the third act for the *mot de l'éénigme*, and then, as might have been expected, returning with the whole of the characters to the scene of the first act, we discover that our speculations have been vain—that there is, in fact, no dramatic problem of character or incident to solve. Miss Wentworth and her sorrows have been introduced as a disturbing element into our calculations, only to be withdrawn again, her shipwrecked lover being restored to her arms. Miranda, who has never really been entered for the matrimonial stakes at all, pairs off with a school-boy sweetheart of her own choosing; while the Hon. Danby Cleeve prosaically does what the astute brewer originally proposed that he should do, namely,

marry Miss Belinda. Throughout the play we look for something that never comes, and before we fully realise the barrenness of the subject the curtain has come down, the actors have taken their calls, and the performance appears to be crowned with success. I have endeavoured in this rapid analysis to reconcile the leniency of the public towards the piece with the condemnation passed upon it by the critics. Fundamentally there can be no disagreement between the two parties. Mr. Derrick creates his dramatic effects by the device known as "trailing a herring across the path," or putting us on a false scent, and whatever interest may be aroused for the moment in a mass of spectators by such means, it is impossible that any piece written on these lines should achieve an enduring success. The public will inevitably feel that they have been trifled with.

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Mr. Derrick appears to me to be at fault, not so much in the subject he has selected for treatment as in his manner of treating it. "*Plebeians*" is a farcical piece, and, improbable as it may be that wealthy brewers and money-lenders should run after a penniless "honourable" and bribe him with large sums to marry their respective daughters, there is no reason why, for farcical purpose, they should not do so. It is not to the actual, or to the probable, that the farce writer need confine himself. He is free to deal with the merely conceivable, as anyone will see who glances at the successful farcical comedies, whether French or English, of recent years. But if an author leaves aside what is, or what has been, in real life, and takes what might be as material for farce, he is bound to illustrate it with truthful sketches of character, based upon apt observation. And here Mr. Derrick has failed. Are the Hon. Danby Cleeve, Mr. Basil Brown, and Mr. Israel Ferguson recognisable types of character? I have never met them. Their motions and actions are not governed by the ordinary conditions of life. This is doubly apparent in the case of the Hon. Danby Cleeve, whose aristocratic distinction and attempted sentimentality find very inadequate expression in Mr. Thomas Thorne. In the hands of Mr. Fred Thorne and Mr. Grove, on the other hand, the portraits of the brewer and the money-lender are grossly over-coloured, but this is perhaps a pardonable attempt on the part of the actors to infuse fun into a piece which, while professing to be farcical, contains no humorous situation, and affords little or no scope in any direction for the talents of such excellent actresses as Miss Kate Rorke and Miss Kate Phillips.

New plays produced in London, the provinces, and Paris from December 23, 1885, to January 23, 1886:—

LONDON:

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| December 23. | "The Harbour Lights," a new and original drama, in five acts, by Geo. R. Sims and Henry Pettitt. Adelphi Theatre.                                 |
| ,, 26.       | "Little Jack Sheppard, a new "burlesque-operatic-melodrama," by H. P. Stephens and W. Yardley. Gaiety Theatre.                                    |
| January 2.   | "Najezda," a play, in a prologue and three acts, by Maurice Barrymore. Haymarket Theatre.   |
| ,, 4.        | "Room 70," a new farce, by Percy Fitzgerald. Haymarket Theatre.   |
| ,, 9.        | "Under Cover," comedietta, by Cunningham Bridgman, adapted from "Le Bibelot" of Ernest d'Herville. Gaiety Theatre.                                |
| ,, 12.       | "Plebeians," a new and original comedy, in three acts, by Joseph Derrick. Vaudeville Theatre.   |
| ,, 23.       | (Matinée—single performance.) "Speculation," a new comedy, in three acts, by W. Sapte, jun. Prince's Theatre.                                     |
| ,, 23.       | "The Man with Three Wives!" a farce, in three acts, by C. M. Rae, adapted from "Trois Femmes pour un Mari" of Grenet-Dancourt. Criterion Theatre. |

PROVINCES:

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| January 7. | "Late Love," a comedy-drama, in a prologue and four acts, by Leonard S. Outram, adapted from "L'Aventuriere" of Emile Augier. Theatre Royal, Reading. |
| ,, 8.      | "Bela," a new romantic drama, in four acts, by Gerald Godfrey, adapted from the French. Theatre Royal, Belfast.                                       |
| ,, 15.     | "No Evidence," a sensational drama, by George Lusl Gordon. Theatre Royal, Belfast.  |

PARIS.

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| December 22. | Comédie Française, "La Phèdre de Pradon," an <i>à propos</i> in verse, by Jules Truffier.   |
| ,, 23.       | Renaissance, reproduction of "La Parisienne," in three acts, by Henri Becque. Reproduction of "La Navette," in one act, by Henri Becque.            |
| ,, 23.       | Opéra Comique, reproduction of "Roméo et Juliette," in five acts; libretto by Jules Barbier, music by Gounod.                                       |
| ,, 24.       | Châtelet, "La Guerre," military drama in five acts, by MM. Erckmann-Chatrian.   |
| ,, 25.       | Opéra Comique, reproduction of "Les Contes d'Hoffmann," an opera in four acts, libretto by Jules Barbier and M. Carré, music by Jacques Offenbach.  |
| ,, 28.       | Nouveautés, "Les Nouveautés de Paris," a <i>revue</i> , in three acts and eight tableaux, by MM. Ernest Blum, Albert Wolff, and Raoul Toché.        |
| ,, 30.       | Porte-St.-Martin, reproduction of "Marion Delorme," five act drama in verse, by Victor Hugo.  |
| ,, 31.       | Palais Royal, reproduction of "Le Train de plaisir," a vaudeville in four acts, by MM. Alfred Hennequin, Arnold Mortier, and Albert de Saint-Albin. |

- December 31. Menus-Plaisirs, "Pêle-Mêle Gazette," a *revue*, in four acts and seven tableaux, by MM. Blondeau, Montréal, and Grisier.
- January 6. Palais Royal, "La fille à Georgette," parody in one act, by MM. Valabrégne, Billant, and d'Orgeval, who write under the pseudonym of M. Valbidor.
- ,, 8. Renaissance, "Une Mission Délicate," three act comedy, by Alexandre Bisson.
- ,, 15. Comédie Française, "Molière en Prison," an *à propos* in one act, by Ernest d'Herville.
- ,, 16. Ambigu, "La Banque de l'Univers," drama in five acts, by M. Grenet Dancourt.
- , 19. Opéra Comique, reproduction of "Zampa," opera by Hérold.
- ,, 23. Comédie Française, "Un Parisien," three act comedy by Edmond Gondinet.



# THE THEATRE.

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## “Box and Cox” in Spanish.

BY WALTER GOODMAN.

SEÑOR BALTAZAR TORRECILLAS, impresario and first low comedian of the Teatro de la Reina of Santiago de Cuba, was badly in want of an entirely new *sainete*, or farce, for his annual benefit which was to take place during the season. The actor's own *répertoire* was exhausted and he could think of nothing in the way of comic interludes that had not been already done to the death. So he decided that a little piece should be written expressly for the occasion, and consulted Don Emilio Aguirreozábal on the subject.

Don Emilio was a scratch poet and scene-painter, employed at the theatre for such literary compositions and decorations as might be required, from a topical song to a taking advertisement, and from a stage set to a coloured poster. I was intimately acquainted with this versatile gentleman, and had often assisted in his scenic productions, and it was through him that I became aware of the manager's requirements and of the fact that something in the style of *Un cuarto con dos camas* was wanted. Now, I had never seen that favourite Spanish farce, nor till the don mentioned the title had I ever heard of it; but as I knew that the phrase, in its literal form, stood for a room with two beds in it, and that this in terser English was double-bedded room, I naturally bethought me of a comic piece with precisely that title which a compatriot of mine, not altogether unknown to fame as John Maddison Morton, had once written.

This in turn led me to revert to another farce, by the same prolific pen, which in my native land was as popular as the play of “Hamlet,” and had been performed quite as often as the Shakespearean favourite. Had the don ever heard of a *sainete*, a

comedy, a melo-drama, or a tragedy, in which two men unconsciously occupy the same apartment—the one by day the other by night—use the same coals, the same candle, the same sugar, the same gridiron, and the same box of lucifer matches; fall in love, without knowing it, with the same lady, who never appears on the scene; quarrel about her, offer to fight for her, toss up for her, receive unpaid letters concerning her; get out of the difficulty of marrying her by the very same means, and end by making the astonishing discovery that they are one another's long-lost brother?

No, the don could not recall to mind any such piece, and being much struck by my account of it, at once submitted the plan to his chief, who so far approved of the motive as to order the play to be translated without delay and adapted to the Spanish stage. For this, it was absolutely necessary that the book of the words should be consulted. But the book of the words, together with permission to perform the play, was only to be obtained of Mr. Samuel French, of the Strand, London, or at his corresponding house in New York, and as a communication with the nearest of those localities would necessitate a longer period of waiting than the management could afford, it was decided to do without it.

Now, I had frequently witnessed "Box and Cox" on the stage, dating from the time when Mr. John Baldwin Buckstone impersonated the journeyman printer, and Mr. Compton the journeyman hatter; while in the stage-struck days of my youth I had often undertaken one of the title *rôles* and performed it before crowded drawing-rooms. It was, therefore, not impossible that I might repeat every line of the dialogue without reference to the book. So with a view to put memory to the test, I ran over the opening scene in which Cox is discovered with a looking-glass in his hand and his hair cut very short; and finding no difficulty in recalling every word of that famous speech, and of the conversation with Mrs. Bouncer which follows, I endeavoured to convert the lines into corresponding Castilian for the comprehension of my friends, and this being approved of by the manager, I was entrusted with the duty of adaptation.

This was by no means easy of accomplishment—first, because the management had decided to localise the scene, the incidents, and the characters; and second, because it was difficult to find an equivalent in Spanish for some of the pet phrases introduced in

the original version. The "gentle hatter"—not to mention the pugilistic printer—has rather a round-about and flowery way of expressing himself, and his sentiments could not always be adequately interpreted without spoiling the humour of the language in which those sentiments are conveyed. Thus, *Voto à tal! estoy medio resuelto, à que no se me vuelva jamas à cortar el pelo*, though sufficiently explanatory of "I've half a mind to register an oath that I'll never have my hair cut again!" sounded too matter-of-fact and not elegant enough.

Then it seemed somehow to go against the grain, so to speak, to tamper with lines which had grown as familiar in the English ear as "My name is Norval," or "To be or not to be," and yet for local and linguistic purposes this was absolutely necessary, as in the case of "cropped for the militia," for which "shaved like a friar" was substituted, and "open locks whoever knocks," which, being a quotation from a tragedy unknown to Spanish audiences, had similarly to be sacrificed in favour of the everyday expression, "open and enter." Accordingly, *Abra y entra* was Mrs. Bouncer's cue to enter and say:

"Good morning, Mr. Cox. I hope you slept quite comfortably, Mr. Cox;" to which Mr. Cox replies, "I can't say I did, Mrs. Bouncer," etc.

These and similar phrases were, of course, easily translated; their equivalents being as readily found as "Have you the hat? Yes, I have the hat," of an Ollendorff vocabulary; but "protuberant bolster" was a rock ahead to be avoided, as bolsters are unknown luxuries in tropical climates. However, a good-sized pillow called a "Almohada" did well enough for the purpose, and this was duly described by the creolised Cox as having a handful and a-half of feathers at each end and nothing whatever in the middle.

The question of tobacco smoke required careful consideration; first, because there are no chimneys or fire-places in the domestic dwellings of Santiago; and second, because there would be nothing uncommon in that country for a lady of Mrs. Bouncer's years and habits to be "guilty of cheroots and cubas," or even partial to a pipe. As for the "gentleman in the attics who sits for hours with his feet on the mantle-piece," this also required some modification, on account of the constructive arrangements of Cuban habitations, which, as a general rule, possess but one story

and no mantle-pieces worth mentioning. The difficulty of a fireplace, which is so important for the cooking scene, was got over by the substitution of a charcoal stove of brick, though this is usually placed for culinary purposes in the *patio*, or courtyard. Cox's objection to the effluvia of Box's tobacco was sufficiently accounted for by making the printer smoke cigars of a spurious brand; otherwise, the hatter's dislike to smoking, in a country where everybody indulges in the practice, would be inconsistent.

Mrs. Bouncer's reflections concerning her lodgers and their eccentric ways were reproduced without much trouble, as was also the dialogue between her and Box which follows, unless exception be taken to the printer's inquiry as to who is the individual whom he invariably encounters going down stairs when he is coming up, and coming up stairs when he is going down, which, in the absence of a staircase, was altered to "going out when I am coming in."

Box's observations after he has got rid of "that venerable female" were faithfully transcribed, even to his consideration as to whether he shall take his nap before he swallows his breakfast, or take his breakfast before he swallows his nap, the close equivalent of which was, "*Vamos à ver. Tomarémos la siesta antes de tragár el almuerzo? ó mas bien, tomarémos el almuerzo antes de tragár la siesta? Es decir, que tragaré primero la siesta y . . . . no, no es esto . . . . pero que importa?*" The first of May, chimney-sweeper's day, which Box mentions as the precise date when his candle was purchased, was, for an obvious reason, changed to "*el dia primero de Paseuas*," or the first day of Lent, but the remainder of his speech went smoothly to the end, where he speculates upon the possibility of his bacon turning itself while he is taking his siesta, for which "*Quizá dará vueltas por si mismo*" did duty.

In Cox's companion soliloquy, which immediately follows upon the closing of Box's bed-curtains, some slight deviations from the text were made, in referring to "Gravesend and back—fare one shilling," to "Greenwich for fourpence," to the "Twopenny omnibuses and the penny steamboats," for all of which native localities and conveyances were thought of. It was necessary also to localise Cox's mutton chop by transforming it into an article of food more familiar than that essentially English commodity; and Bacalao, or dried stock fish naturally suggested itself. The actor of the part, however, might introduce any other native comestible

which he might consider more appropriate; such, for example, as the sausage known as Longaniza or that called Chorizo. All the business of Cox's discovery that the fire is lighted and that the gridiron is *on* the fire—a proceeding which he attributes to the "quiet coolness of Mrs. Bouncer"—was closely followed, as was also Box's business when he awakes and finds that his *tocino* has been removed for the accommodation of Mrs. Bouncer's *bacalao*.

When the pair eventually meet with "Who are you, sir?" "If you come to that, sir, who are you?" "*Hola! quien es usted, caballero?*" and "*Y usted, compadre, quien es?*" was preferred; and when Cox shouts, "Thieves!" and Box "Murder!" while questioning one another's right to the possession of the apartment, "*Asesino!*" and "*Fuego!*" were substituted. Mrs. Bouncer's inquiry, "What is the matter?" when she is summoned, was similarly converted into "*Por Dios! que hay, señores?*" as the original phrase appeared too tame when correctly rendered. A more important change was necessary for the smoking scene, in which Cox objects to Box's tobacco and retaliates by opening the window, as windows in Cuban dwellings, being devoid of glass, are perpetually open. A liberty was, therefore, here taken by making the hatter produce a trombone, which he blows in the direction of the printer's tobacco fumes and declines to put down till his companion puts down his bad cigar. For Box's remark, "Hark ye, sir, can you fight?" which occurs during the dispute about the lawful ownership of the bed, the expression "*tirar à trompadas*" was employed in preference to "*Plear,*" as the first of these terms is applied exclusively to fisticuffs and the last to fighting generally. And when Cox says emphatically, "No, sir!" in response to the challenge, Box's "Then come on!" was strengthened by "*Pues entonces ponga usted en guardia, y . . . adelante!*" for although "*Adelante*" is a near approach to "Come on," it has not quite the same significance as the Anglo-Saxon term.

A few alterations were required for the melo-dramatic story of Penelope Ann, in which Box relates how he enlisted in the Blues or the Life Guards, and mentions Ramsgate and Margate while referring to the proprietor of bathing machines. Some trifling variations were likewise necessary for the account of the fair one's behaviour, when, with a view to withdraw from his engagement, Box tells her that he isn't worthy of her; upon which, instead of

being flattered by the compliment, his affiancée flies upon him like a tiger of the female gender, and ends by levelling at her lover something that turns out to be a slop basin, which is shivered into a thousand fragments against the mantle-piece. These were, however, mere matters of detail, and in no way interfered with the terrible anti-climax in which the unfortunate hero of the romance deposits a suit of clothes on the very verge of the frightful precipice ; takes one look into the yawning gulf beneath, and—walks off in the opposite direction.

The most was made of the proposed duel, when “pistols for two” are demanded of Mrs. Bouncer, who, after mentioning that the fire-arms are not loaded, is requested to instantly produce the murderous weapons. Such a topic would naturally be of special interest to the combative sons of old Castille, and accordingly it was somewhat enlarged upon in the Spanish version. For the same reason, the gambling propensities of Box and Cox were fully developed in the scene where those heroes throw dice and toss up for Penelope Ann. No portion of the dialogue relating to this important subject was omitted, even to the famous “Heads I win, tails you lose” passage. *Cara y Corona*, or Face and Crown, is the Castilian counterpart of heads and tails ; so when the Spanish Box makes the discovery that the “lucky sixpence”—here called a *real*—of the Spanish Cox has “got no tail,” and the latter returns the compliment by declaring that the printer’s “tossing shilling,” or *peseta*, possesses two heads, all this is adequately expressed by—

Box. “*Hola ! El real de usted no tiene corona.*”

Cox. “*Y encuentro que la pes eta de usted amigo, lleva dos caras.*”

Far from plain sailing was the translation of the letter in which is recorded the melancholy accident to Penelope Ann, who went out for a short excursion in a sailing boat, when a sudden squall took place, which, it was supposed, upset her, as she was found two days afterwards keel upwards ; and considerable doubt was entertained as to whether the point of Box’s parenthetic exclamation, “Poor woman !” would not be wholly lost ; inasmuch as boat in Spanish is masculine. However, by giving more prominence to the word keel (which as *Quilla* becomes feminine) the humour of the original was sufficiently preserved. The second communication, announcing the rescue from a watery grave of Penelope Ann, was less embarrassing, and the same may be said of the third docu-

ment conveying the welcome intelligence of the widow's immediate union with Mr. Knox.

From this point the lines were comparatively easy to transcribe, not excepting Box's famous inquiry whether Cox possesses such a thing as a strawberry mark on his left arm, to which the latter replies "No!" whereupon Box exclaims, "Then, 'tis he!" and they rush into each others arms. But, as the last line required strengthening in the Spanish version, I took the liberty of adding the stage gag, "Come to my arms, my long lost brother!" which it was usual to introduce, and accordingly this phrase was duly converted into "*Que venga à estos brazos el hermano por tanto tiempo perdido!*" The tag of the piece, in which the recently found brothers decide, after what has happened, to stop where they are, as the house is large enough to hold them both and the mistress of it is apparently anxious to please, was similarly disposed of.

All that now remained was to find suitable titles for the characters. This was by no means the lightest part of the undertaking, for, if the spirit of the original was to be preserved, it was highly necessary that the names should assimilate, especially in the case of Box, Cox, and Knox. With this in view, I recalled to mind a vast number of euphonious cognomens and words having an alliterative sound, such as Tripoli and Trapoli, Crispin and Crispiniano, Boca and Roca, Hueso and Queso; but one and all were rejected, chiefly because no third name was discovered which corresponded in point of brevity and rhythm with the other two. At length, upon the principle of finding at home that which has been vainly sought for abroad, it occurred to me to turn Box into its literal equivalent of Caja, and having done so, Baja was soon thought of and adopted; and being a word signifying low, as applied to a fall in market prices, it might be considered applicable to Cox's circumstances. After this it was not very difficult to discover a suitable title for Knox, and the most appropriate was Faja, a term which stands for sash, and is also applied to similar articles susceptible of tying or binding. For Mrs. Bouncer, Doña Robustiana was fairly *ben trovato*; Anna Barbara did well enough for Penelope Ann, while the best that could be done for Mr. William Wiggins was Vicente Valiente.

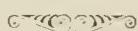
The titles with which the characters had been thus re-christened would, of course, be a matter for the decision of the management. Meanwhile there was one important point which necessi-

tated immediate consideration, as it might possibly seriously affect the motive of the piece. This had reference to the respective callings of Caja y Baja, which till now was a subject which had been inadvertently overlooked. There was nothing to be said against the favourite occupation of Mr. James Cox, inasmuch as journeyman hatters, hailing from Spain, were common enough in her colonies; and in the opening scene, where Cox tries on different hats which will not fit him, an opportunity was afforded for introducing the native head-covering known as the Panama, of which there is an endless variety. But it is otherwise in the case of a journeyman printer. White people are rarely employed in a subordinate capacity at a printing-office, the duties being usually fulfilled by members of the coloured community. In a slave country, the printer's devil is quite as black as he is painted by report and printing-ink—to say nothing of nature; and although a Creole Box need not necessarily be a 'nigger, he could hardly be represented as a white man.

More in keeping with native notions would be a journeyman printer who was either a mulatto, a quadroon, or a half-caste. This, again, had its drawbacks, as no Mrs. Bouncer could consistently say to a coffee-coloured Box, "I declare you look quite *pale* in the face!" and it would be equally at variance with the situation for a person in the guise of a Moore and Burgess minstrel to reply, "What colour would you have a man be, who has been setting up long leaders all night [for a daily paper?]" But, apart from this consideration, it was more than doubtful whether a Box of any colour, except white, would be tolerated upon the stage in a land where "real" negroes and native prejudices are as plentiful as blackberries. Then there was the Censor of Plays and Penelope Ann. The Censor of Plays was an awful personage, invested with all sorts of administrative authority, and he would certainly have something to say on the subject. As for Penelope Ann, unless that immaculate lady were a bird of the same swarthy plumage, she could scarcely attach herself to a coloured man, either by hearsay or behind the scenes, without shocking the sensibilities of her unsullied sisters in the stalls.

Under these circumstances, the copper-coloured printer was abandoned, while, in conformity with native tastes and native trade, he was ultimately turned into a Creole tobacconist. This was highly approved of by the audience when the piece, after having been

carefully revised and rehearsed, was presented for the first time to the public. And, as the play was pronounced a success, the reader of these pages will naturally and rightly conclude that manager, actors, and author echoed the sentiments expressed by the long-lost brothers when they say in the tag of the farce, "And Box—And Cox—Are satisfied."



## After the Ball.

**S**HE counts her conquests all as naught  
 Before this crowning one ;  
 The love that seemed to come unsought,  
     Like splendours of the sun.  
 And every word he spoke to-night  
     Is graven on her brain  
 In letters of auroral light,  
     For ever to remain.

She lays her lips upon the hands  
     His fervent lips have kissed ;  
 And o'er her clear eyes as she stands  
     There comes a happy mist.  
 What was her charm in form or face  
     O'er others at the ball  
 That he should do her such a grace  
     As choose her 'mid them all ?

She casts her shining silks aside,  
     And robes her for her rest ;  
 Her only dream till morning-tide,  
     " He loves me—loves me best."  
 O virgin faith ! O face so sweet !  
     O heart that pulses true !  
 Will any man's heart ever beat  
     As loyally for you ?

He leaves the ball, but not for rest,  
And not for faithful dream ;  
Life needs, it seems, another zest  
Where Laïs reigns supreme.  
Fill high the beaker with champagne,  
And crown the board with flow'rs ;  
A husband may not know again  
Such gay Bohemian hours.

Not his the love that lives for aye,  
Not his the loyal troth ;  
His passion lasts a summer day,  
He swears a traitor's oath.  
So take this moral 'mid the strife  
Of Hymeneal plans,  
That love is all a woman's life,  
And only half a man's.

H. SAVILE CLARKE.



## Paris At The Play.

BY T. JOHNSON.

MUCH as has been written about Shakespeare and Victor Hugo, there always remains something still to say when great men like these are being discussed. If in a century from now "Marion Delorme" should be reproduced, the critics of the time would have opinions to submit to their readers, just as the critics of to-day write long articles on "Romeo and Juliet," "Macbeth," or "Hamlet." Although written three months before "Hernani," "Marion Delorme" only saw the light eighteen months later; but yet it may be considered as the dramatic *début* of Victor Hugo, and for that reason interest attaches to it, as from that time dates the inauguration of the school called the *Ecole Romantique*, created by the French poet. "Hernani" was represented at the Comédie Francaise, whereas "Marion Delorme" was produced at the Porte St. Martin on August 11th, 1831. The old Porte St. Martin, which was built in eighty-six days, was opened on October 27th, 1781, with a free performance that Marie Antoinette attended. Burned during the Commune, when rebuilt it was destined for opera, the Opera House having also been destroyed by fire, and it was not till 1814, under the management of M. Saint Romain, that it became the home of drama, a style of performance to which it has ever since adhered. By the express desire of King Charles X. the Ministers Martignac and Polegnac from 1829 to 1830 prohibited the play, and it was after the Revolution of July, when theatres once more regained their liberty, that the idea was formed of mounting "Marion Delorme," which till then had remained on the censor's desk. Victor Hugo himself says, in the preface to the piece, that, in spite of the entreaties of friends, he was loth to have the piece mounted then, for he did not desire a success that was due to

political reaction, considering such successes to be not only of little value, but not lasting ; and so he refused to authorise the representation of "Marion Delorme." More than a year after the Revolution of 1830, as I have already said, Victor Hugo sought the opinion of the public, the principal interpreters then being Madame Marie Dorval, who was in the height of her artistic glory, and M. Bocage, whose nephew, I may in parenthesis remark, is one of the authors of "La Doctoresse," the Gymnase play. The story of "Marion Delorme" is too well known to call for more than the briefest analysis. Didier, who is a young man of twenty, falls in love with Marion in that headlong, reckless manner peculiar to youth, and without knowing that the object of his mad adoration is only the commonest of courtesans. The Marquis de Saverny, one of Marion's many lovers, after having had his life saved against assassins by Didier, picks a quarrel with his preserver, and the duel over, Didier is arrested, and the two combatants are condemned to death, for the edicts of the King, or rather those of Cardinal Richelieu, are positive enough, and the minister of Louis XIII. has resolved to put a stop to duelling. Marion, however, wishes to save Didier, and to accomplish this she shrinks from no sacrifice. To preserve his life she yields to the embraces of M. de Laffernas ; but Didier, who now knows the shameful past of the woman he has worshipped, guesses at the horrid bargain made by her, and declines to be saved on such terms. He curses Marion and heaps reproaches on her about her degraded existence ; but when on the point of death his heart is touched, he forgives her, and mounts the scaffold with courage. I have only, as will be seen, sketched the leading features of the drama. Victor Hugo was censured for seeking to rehabilitate the courtesan, but such I am sure was never the great poet's intention. Besides, Marion is not rehabilitated—far from it ; indeed, her last sacrifice proves useless, but, fallen though she is, she inspires a certain pity. From the realistic point of view, that is to say, that of the modern drama, other and more serious criticisms could be applied to "Marion Delorme." For instance, it is difficult to understand the anger of Didier against Saverny for a mere glance at his mistress ; still more incomprehensible is it that he should be in ignorance of the past of a notorious woman when all the town knew, whose name was a byword, and whose intrigues were a secret to no one. Sardou's "Théodora,"

in this respect, is a little like "Marion Delorme," for the real character of the Empress Théodora is not known to her lover, who also, it may be remembered, spurns her as Didier does before dying. In the first acts it must be admitted Madame Sarah Bernhardt was not equal to her task. In spite of her immense talent, which every now and again astonishes her beholders, the great *tragédienne* gives way to a manner, or rather an affectation of speech, which is quite out of place in the part. In turn she whispers, whines, and gabbles, instead of speaking distinctly, and the *voix d'or*, that has been considered one of her greatest charms, is certainly not what it was. "Marion Delorme" was played in 1872 at the Comédie Française, at which house the mounting was not equal to that provided now by M. Duquesnel, but the interpretation was by far superior. As a matter of fact, Victor Hugo's verses are not as easy to deliver as is the prose of Victorien Sardou. Marais, for instance, labours at the lines with a monotony that takes from them not only half their poetry, but their point, at the same time; and Berton, with his constantly quivering voice, cannot be expected to equal Delaunay. The *mise en scène*, I have already said, excels that of the Théâtre Français, indeed, historical accuracy could not be carried further than it has been by M. Duquesnel, who has made a frame fully worthy of the picture. The renowned critic, Théophile Gauthier, after a reproduction of "Marion Delorme" in November, 1839, wrote thus:—

"Faire l'éloge de 'Marion Delorme' est maintenant chose superflue. Ce beau drame réunit la gravité passionnée de Corneille et la folle allure des comédies romanesques de Shakespeare. Quelle variété de ton! quelle vivacité charmante! 'Marion Delorme' est une des pièces de Victor Hugo où l'on aime le plus à revenir; c'est un roman, une comédie, un drame, un poème où toutes les cordes de la lyre vibrent tour à tour."

The characteristic of all great works is that they do not lose their value. Time, even, does not diminish it, and the public applaud them always, because real, that is to say, human, sentiments belong to all epochs. They date from the creation.

"UNE MISSION DELICATE," By M. Bisson, has been produced at the Renaissance. It must be honestly accorded that operetta has had its day. One after the other the theatres, so to speak, dedicated to this kind of entertainment have given it up, either

for vaudeville or comedy. Are composers or the public to blame for this transformation? The question is difficult to answer; but, personally, I own to feeling no regret at the change. There are but two theatres in Paris devoted to this special creation of Offenbach's, namely, the Bouffes Parisiens, managed by Madame Ugalde, and the Folies Dramatiques, presided over by Brasseur, *fils*. The Nouveautés, the sceptre of which is wielded by Brasseur, *père*, can hardly be added to the list, seeing that it is vaudevilles, with songs and *revues*, rather than operettas, that are produced on the Boulevard des Italiens, pieces in which the music, usually by Lecocq or Planquette, is only of secondary importance. The Renaissance has also, since the new management, renounced lyric art, nor has it gone in for real comedy or drama; for it would, to say the least, be exaggeration to write of the "Mission Délicate" of M. Bisson as a serious play. Properly speaking, it is a farce—a farce to provoke laughter—and nothing else. Two friends of Captain Picardon, Messieurs Labarède and Pessonnois, are requested by this officer on his departure for Africa to keep an eye on Mdlle. Angelina, a young lady of by no means spotless virtue, but to whom the Captain has given his heart. As in a French piece like this, it will be supposed, instead of guarding the lady's virtue, the efforts of MM. Labarède and Pessonnois are directed to her further degradation. Equally easy, also, is it to predict that Captain Picardon returns from Africa just when he is least expected, and that he finds his friend Labarède basking in the favours of Angelina, the said friend narrowly escaping detection by Picardon in his treacherous interview with Angelina. Of course, Labarède in his flight forgets his hat, which is picked up by the hall porter, and taken to the *commissaire de police* of the parish, as a means of identifying the thief that is supposed to have entered the premises. It is difficult to analyse the embroil that ensues. Pessonnois and Labarède are each in turn arrested, to be in turn set at liberty, and Captain Picardon, who has learnt the infidelity of Angelina, seeks to revenge himself on Labarède by having the wife of this latter courted by a young nephew of his, who in reality is in love with Mdlle. Labarède instead, and subsequently marries her. The plot is so complicated as sometimes to perplex the spectator, and if the piece was saved from failure this was due, not to the new, but to the amusing, incidents it contains. Then the talent of

St. Germain and Delannois, as Labarède and Pessonnois, contribute not a little to the support of the play, the success of which without these able actors would have been doubtful in the extreme. M. Bisson is the author of "Le Député de Bombignac," produced some time ago at the Théâtre Francais; but I doubt whether his latest essay will equal the popularity of his preceding work, for there is a terrible want of probability about the whole piece. The scenes are neither logically nor sufficiently led up to, and, although on the stage all is a matter of convention, still there needs at least to be some connecting link or some motive for the different situations unravelled before the eyes of the spectators. M. Bisson would seem, in fact, to have overlooked all stage requirements.

"LA COMEDIE FRANCAISE." I need not tell the readers of THE THEATRE that every French actor has an ambition, more or less pronounced, to become a *sociétaire* of the Comédie Française. The fact is already well known. The position is one, as a rule, combining glory with profit; but there have been artistes who have voluntarily renounced the honour because they have not deemed the pecuniary advantages sufficient. Amongst these I may mention Mdme. Plessis, Mdlle. Rachel, and, only recently, Sarah Bernhardt. Generally, however, the *sociétariat* so much sought after is not given up; for not only are the members well remunerated when acting, but they are entitled, when the period for retiring comes, to a pension, which puts them for ever beyond the reach of want. The company is divided into *pensionnaires* and *sociétaires*; these latter, when they leave the house before their term of service is ended, can re-enter as *pensionnaires*, but not as *sociétaires*. Mdme. Plessis and Mdlle. Rachel both returned to the Rue Richelieu in this way. It would take up too much of your space to fully describe the organisation of this house, which is almost the same now as it was under Napoleon I., who by a decree, dated from Moscow, drew all its principal rules. The house is managed by a director appointed by the Minister. M. Jules Claretie, who has recently succeeded to M. Emile Perrin, did not, as a matter of fact, find the historic establishment in so flourishing a condition as one might suppose. To tell the truth, the budget is burdened with such heavy charges that it is certain the engagement of *pensionnaires* will not be as numerous in the future as they have been in the past. The following is the list of

pensions paid by the house to retired *sociétaires*, the amount varying, as will be seen, according to the years of service :—

					£	s.	d.
Mdme. Melingue	retired in	1852	after	9 years' service	140	0	0
Mdme. Denain	"	1856	"	16	160	0	0
M. Maillart	"	1863	"	20	232	0	0
M. Geffroy	"	1865	"	36	328	0	0
Mdme. Judith	"	1866	"	14	200	0	0
Mdme. Augustine Brohan	,	1868	"	27	256	0	0
M. Lafontaine	"	1871	"	8	80	0	0
Mdme. Lafontaine	"	1871	"	8	80	0	0
M. Bressant	"	1879	"	23	224	0	0
M. Talbot	"	1879	"	23	224	0	0
Mdme. Favart	"	1880	"	31	294	0	0
Mdme. Dinah Felix	"	1882	"	20	200	0	0
Mdme. Croizette	"	1883	"	12	90	0	0
Mdme. Riquier	"	1884	"	28	265	12	0
Mdme. Madelaine Brohan	,	1885	"	34	316	12	0
Total			...	...	£3,090	4	0

To this sum must be added that for pensions paid to *pensionnaires*, namely, Mesdames Devoyod, Arnould Plessy, Emma Fleury, and M. Chery, which amounts to £640, then the pensions for 25 *employés* reaches £755 8s., and actors' widows come in for £444, making in all £4,299 12s., which would be a heavy tax on the revenue of the theatre if it had to be taken from the nightly receipts or from the subvention granted by Government. Indeed, but for an ingenious arrangement, which I will explain, the Comédie Française would probably have an annual deficiency. The salary of a *sociétaire*, entitled to what is called a full share, is £580, besides a share in the profits, only half of which latter the *sociétaire* receives till he or she retires; the other half being kept in hand, and no interest even paid on it. No matter how many years an actor may have belonged to the house, not a fraction of this moiety of his share in the profits can be utilised by him till he finally retires. The *pensionnaires*, who are like artistes engaged in other theatres, have, of course, nothing kept back from the payments due to them, because they are paid fixed salaries, and are not entitled to share the profits. One thing is certain, that if the *sociétaires* had only £580 per annum, they would be less well paid than are actors in the minor theatres of Paris; but, as a matter of fact, the chief source of revenue is the share of profits I have alluded to. Although this house is in a state of prosperity now, the new director, M. Jules Claretie, has determined, with a view to guarding against all

possible eventualities, to keep the present expenses down, and to refrain from increasing the number of his artistes. Many noble enough aspirations may be blighted by this decision ; but, besides the economical reasons, which alone would justify it, the matter may be looked at from still another point of view. The troupe of the Comédie Française is a numerous one, and many of the young members possessed of talent have only rare opportunities of appearing before the public ; therefore, in deciding not to add to the staff, except under very rare circumstances, M. Claretie will give these rising artistes a chance of being seen oftener—an advantage for which many, I know full well, will be grateful to him.

The theatrical mind just now is much agitated concerning the question of free passes, which some directors are clamouring to have suppressed altogether, whilst others think such a course would be impossible. One thing is certain, and that is that the order system of the present day is a terrible tax upon managers, who might reply, if questioned, as the late J. B. Buckstone did when asked why he had not written anything new lately—"That he had been too busy writing orders." It is not always easy to change a long-established custom, and I doubt, for instance, if many managers would be found disposed to claim payment for Press seats. Koning, of the Gymnase, is of opinion that such newspaper proprietors as desire to notice a piece should pay for the places they require, and that, on the other hand, theatrical managers should pay for all their daily advertisements (which are not paid for here, as in England), besides the particular announcements they are continually wanting in the way of puffing, publication of receipts, a change of cast, &c. This would be a radical reform, easier in theory than in practice. I think a journalist had the idea before M. Koning of paying for his seats at theatres. To ensure the independence of theatrical accounts in *Le Figaro*, M. de Villemessent endeavoured to compel his contributors not to go to a theatre without paying for their places. After lengthy discussions, the plan was acknowledged to be an impossible one. and the reason given me at the time by Auguste Vitu, the noted dramatic critic, is worthy of reproduction. "The fashion," said he, "for first nights has so spread in Paris, of late years, that it is difficult, even with one's money, to get tickets, for they are taken up by agents and sold at fabulous prices, and this, generally, before we have noticed the date of a production." A paper like *Le*

*Figaro*, needing a certain number of seats—one, for the dramatic critic being, as I shall presently point out, insufficient—would always be obliged to appeal to the courtesy of the manager to get the seats required, at box-office prices; and thus, being indebted to him for this favour, the critic's independence would not be more assured than before. About the same time, M. de Ville-messant made a similar trial respecting railways, and for a certain period no representative of the newspaper took advantage of the Press privileges granted by railway companies. The motive of independence was the same, namely, so that reporters should be at liberty to write fully of accidents, and to ask for, and point out, reforms needed; but this idea also was quickly abandoned when it was seen that the desired results could not be better assured by the change. In the distribution of free passes there is, I readily own, a terrible abuse. I am not speaking of first nights here, when, as in London, most of the house is given away, but of the following performances, for which secretaries and box-keepers are besieged by requests for seats—requests that cannot be justified. Still, would a complete refusal for all orders increase receipts much?

Some of the directors are asking the Committee of Dramatic Authors to prohibit free passes in all theatres. Have the Committee the right to pronounce such a decree? This needs looking into; but in any case, why ask for a general rule? Why, for instance, does not M. Koning adopt it at the Gymnase? Is it not always easy when a piece is doing good business to reply negatively to all ticket seekers; and when a play only draws half houses how much more encouraging it is for the artistes to play to a crowd of spectators instead of rows of empty benches?

Koning would refuse Press seats; but this is not practicable I think, for though there are hosts of newspapers that could well bear that or any other expense, to others it would be a consideration. It has been said, and it is quite true, that the Press cannot make a bad piece succeed, but, it may also be remarked, that the Press can help on a play that is only passable, and prolong its run; but to attain this, there needs to be a certain unanimity, and the notices of two or three important papers are not sufficient. The Press service for the first nights is, it must be acknowledged, a big consideration. As an example I will subjoin what I know to be usual for at least one leading daily here. A box to hold five

persons for the editor and his family, a similar box for the critic, two stalls for the writer who does what is called *Le Courrier du Théâtre*, and two stalls for him who writes the *Article à Côté*, or gossiping notice; not to mention those that a manager would not be able to refuse to some influential members of the staff. In spite of all this, as I have already said, I doubt whether managers can be independent of the Press; indeed, it is to facilitate the labours of critics that dress rehearsals the day before the production have been introduced, so that the notices may duly appear the morning after the first representation. There is one other point to examine—it is that of author's tickets, which are no other than free passes. The author of a piece in Paris has a right to a certain number of seats which he is at liberty to sell, or give, as he chooses, but from which the management profits nothing, and should these be done away with too? Will the manager pay his author the amount the tickets are worth?

There is *much ado about nothing* in all this, and the committee of authors has nothing to do with the question, and any decision it may give cannot possibly please everyone, but it is so the custom in this red-tape-loving country to submit all questions to some tribunal. What more reason is there for this institution to pronounce the absolute abolition of all orders, than there would be for it to issue a decree, whereby all theatres should be painted one colour.



## The Angels' Visit.

AN ALLEGORY IN VERSE.

I was alone! The City sad with sleep,  
Where tears are sown that time alone can reap.  
Distance before, behind the darkened street,  
The empty pavement echoed to my feet,  
And mist-crown'd spires of churches to the sky  
Pointed from earth to heaven reproachfully!

I passed a darkened home—I held my breath,  
Feeling the presence and the chill of death—

There, taper-lighted, in a chamber lay,  
Covered with flow'rs, a cold face cut in clay !  
One woman o'er his features bent to scan  
The marble relic of what once was man !  
The lily scent revived remembered years,  
Each flower's chalice held the dew of tears ;  
Each kiss on that dear forehead, calm and white,  
Shut out the world, revealed the infinite !  
“ If he would only whisper now,” she said.  
“ What are the buried secrets of the dead ?  
“ If he could only wake just once to know  
“ The bitter truth that I have loved him so !  
“ This one lone soul I would have died to save  
“ I cannot rescue from to-morrow’s grave.”  
Revolt and anguish in her senses mix,  
As from her neck she tears a crucifix ;  
Then on his heart she leaves it in the gloom,  
And kneels, heart-broken, in that haunted room.

Once more I wandered—till a woman’s cry  
Shivered to all the pale stars in the sky.  
In a low street, neglected and alone,  
In faded beauty and with heart of stone,  
Her tarnished hair falling on soiled neck,  
Of all that once was beautiful the wreck,  
Lay there neglected in the morning grey—  
Man’s ruined plaything broken by the way !  
“ There is no mercy in the world,” she said,  
“ For sinners such as I,” then bowed her head,  
And from the lips that once were roses twain  
Poured from her heart release of prison’d pain :  
“ I could have borne the sorrow and the smart  
“ Men seal in blood upon a woman’s heart ;  
“ I could endure reproach of the defiled,  
“ And die a thousand deaths—to save my child !  
“ I’d suffer all that such as I endure,  
“ I am polluted—she at least is pure !  
“ They took my child, by God’s sweet mercy sent,  
“ For she was dying for my nourishment ;  
“ Another’s arms will rock her to her rest,  
“ A maiden mother soothe her on her breast ;

"The patient sisters watch her troubled sleep,  
"Whilst I, her outcast mother, can but weep."

I wandered on, and found one lonely light  
Breaking the darkness of the silent night.  
There, in a garden hospital, had grown  
The flowers God had planted for his own.  
Soft guarded by sweet sisters undefiled,  
Lay, rack'd with pain, the suffering little child.  
Fever had made the infant's face grow old,  
And agony bedewed her hair of gold.  
"There may be hope," they whispered as she lay ;  
"God's flowers waken at the dawn of day."

And as they spoke, a faint flush in the sky  
Gilded the sleeping city lovingly.  
From out the lilac of the lovely east,  
Three guardian angels were from heaven released.  
One, crowned with lilies, to death's chamber sped ;  
One flew to raise the outcast's lowly head ;  
One folded wings above the infant's bed.  
Then to the troubled heart one angel said :  
"Take heart, be comforted, though he be dead.  
"Love is a bridge, pass on, but do not stay ;  
"Love is an hour, the minutes count, but pray.  
"Life has divided you, oh ! pause and see  
"The endless rapture of eternity.  
"He waits for you in that eternal glow  
"That some can picture, none can ever know.  
"The love desired on earth is sometimes given  
"To those who pray, and meet again in heaven."

The second angel soothed the outcast's sighs,  
Kissing the tear-drops from her weary eyes :  
"You loved much ! There is no punishment,  
"For such as make confession and repent.  
"Come, with your tears to wash the bruised feet,  
"Broken with stones of the unlovely street.  
"Lean on the sacred heart, its pity see ;  
"Depart in peace, thy faith hath saved thee."  
"When did the sinner cry in vain ? Ah, when ?  
"The purest saint is perfect Magdalen."

The third sweet angel on the infant smiled,  
And soothed with sleep the suffering little child,  
And the sweet sisters watching by the bed  
Knew morn had come and agony had fled.

The sleeping city woke to life anew,  
As back to heaven three guardian angels flew ;  
And three poor tortured creatures felt release,  
Chastened by comfort of a promised peace.  
Winging their rosy way to realms above,  
The angels pointed to Eternal Love.

CLEMENT SCOTT.



## Our Musical-Box.

**A**T the risk of being stigmatised as a *retardataire* by the readers of THE THEATRE, I must crave their permission this month to say a few words about M. Felix Remo's "Music in Fog-Land," a work that has already been frequently, though for the most part cursorily, referred to by my colleagues of the daily and weekly press, who, however, with one distinguished exception, have failed to do justice to its chief merits, whilst laying, as it seems to me, over heavy stress upon its incidental inaccuracies. These latter, I may here take occasion to observe, are for the most part unimportant in character; whereas the book teems from beginning to end with more or less interesting facts and with correct information relating to English music and musicians, to collect which must have cost the author almost inconceivable pains and trouble. Who he is, and whether Remo be really his name or only a *nom de plume*, I know not. One thing is very certain—namely, that there has been a "chiel" of the French persuasion "amang us takin' notes" to some purpose, and that he has most unquestionably "prented 'em." I have learned more about the *personnel* of the musical profession in my native land from M. Remo's volume than I had ever hoped to know, until I read it. Not from any other book of my acquaintance dealing with the same subject can as many details be gathered in connection with English composers, teachers, and executants, known and unknown to the general public. In this particular direction the ponderous tones of Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians is not "in it" with Remo's "La Musique au Pays des Brouillards," which tells us all about our leading musical amateurs as well as "professionals," and spells their names, *exceptis excipiendis*, with an accuracy hitherto unattained by Gallic writers who have dealt with British patronymics. With respect to London



"A very happy New Year to you all!"

Yours ever faithfully

Alfred Scott.



*dilettanti*, M. Remo's information is, indeed, no less curious—I had almost written unique—than various and comprehensive. But for him, in all probability, I, in common with many other of his readers, should never have been apprised that Mr. Champann, Major John Gollup, Mr. Gracia, Mr. Gardom, and Mr. Nokes rank as eminent amateurs in the musical circles of this metropolis. He has also brought to my knowledge many names of London conductors, organists, pianists, singers, and soloists upon all kinds of musical instruments, of which I was previously as ignorant as is an average alligator of trigonometry. Whilst perusing his book I found myself recurrently experiencing that class of surprise or pleasurable perplexity which is undergone by the schoolboy of a methodical turn, who, feeling in his favourite breeches' pocket, finds himself possessed of more marbles than he can logically account for. M. Remo's eye becomes microscopic when it is engaged in contemplating any particular branch of the English musical profession. Nothing escapes it, however insignificant or even trivial. It sees through shams, no matter how thickly enveloped in wraps of respectability; strips impostors of their borrowed plumes; espies natural deformities, be they ever so cunningly padded out or pinched in to counterfeit shapeliness; and recognises the sterling metal of genuine talent, even when so rusty or discoloured as to resemble worthless dross in its outer seeming.

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These being some of M. Remo's characteristics as a writer on English music and musicians, I need, perhaps, scarcely remark that many of his criticisms and comments are horribly personal. There is scarcely a page of his book in which the unwritten laws of literary courtesy are not daringly violated, or in which the exact truth is not told about some well-known *virtuoso* or *dilettante* with inconsiderate but engaging frankness. M<sup>r</sup>. Remo is beyond a doubt no respecter of persons, but a light-hearted iconoclast, delighting in the overthrow of popular idols, and, when he has shattered them into fragments, dancing merrily round their *disjecta membra*. As far as his incisive arraignments of individual humbugs and frauds are concerned, I do not propose to increase their circulation by quoting them in this place. Some of them are justly severe; others unjustly so. Those who experience any curiosity respecting M. Remo's opinions of our celebrated composers, singers, and teachers of music must read his book, and judge for themselves whether or not its superficial scurrility be superimposed upon a solid stratum of fact. They may not be edified by the "more than American directness" with which he speaks his mind about hallowed members of the profession; but they will assuredly be amused. His observations are manifestly free from any hostile animus, even when most startlingly uncivil; and it is obvious that he invariably means to be veracious, although he is not always perfectly successful—as what human being is?—in his endeavour to be so. But as he is no whit less diverting when he generalises than when he particularises, I cannot withstand the temptation to reproduce, in translation, a few of the more trenchant

sentences which he passes upon English social classes, cliques, and institutions more or less directly connected with the practice of the musical art in this country.

M. Remo finds fault with what he calls "the English method" of private music teaching. "To learn music," he observes, "you must begin, as in learning a language, with the grammar. This is not how English teachers instruct their pupils. They begin by setting a piece of music before them, and trying to make them play it. Consequently, children toil for years, and know no more at the end of their labours than they did at the beginning; their parents spend large sums of money, and make sacrifices which turn out utterly futile. The child is ignorant of every rule; it just knows the notes of its own 'piece,' at which it hammers away for ten years or so—that is to say, until it gets married and gives up music, which it loathes, having only too good cause to do so. Ask any young English girl in society to accompany a song at sight, or to sing a part in a concerted *morceau* she has never seen before. Can she do it, think you? No; in virtue of a hallowed fallacy, she will tell you that 'reading at sight is a gift.' Now it is no more a 'gift' than reading the newspaper is a gift; it is simple routine, acquired with the greatest possible ease, if only you are taught by a real musician. I regret to say that England possesses few such—that is, amongst its professional teachers. What would you say to a schoolmaster who should teach you a leading article by ear, instead of making you learn the alphabet and spell, so that you might read it for yourself? Yet this is exactly the way in which 'pieces' are taught to English children by their music mistresses and masters." How true this is, British middle-class parents by the thousand know to their sorrow and mortification. The following remarks, addressed to a well-known variety of the London "musical lady," and to the professionals who are her favourite victims, are very much to the point: "Madam, you complain of being bombarded with concert-tickets; but you forget that the artists who have sung and played 'for love' at your parties have no other way of making you pay for their gloves and cabs. It is you who, by multiplying your 'musical evenings,' have increased the number of the concerts given during the season; for each several artist is obliged to give at least one, in order to get a guinea apiece out of you and those like you. Why should they go on for ever making you a present of their talents and their time? Do doctors and lawyers put on their tail-coats every evening for the purpose of giving advice gratis at parties? Pray understand that an artist has to live by his art, as a baker by his bread. He finds it easy enough to sing and play, truly; but he has had to learn to do so, he is obliged to keep his voice or his fingers in working order by constant practice, he has to dress in presentable clothes, and to wear a smile on his face, as well as a white cravat round his neck. Do you think it amuses him to put on a society grin, particularly when his larder at home is empty? Artists, a word with you, too. You complain that the guineas are reluctant; but you have spoilt your own game. Why are you so lavish of your gifts? If you never accepted

any invitation that did not enclose your fee—say, in a discreet postscript—people would soon get accustomed to paying you your due, just as they pay their medical and legal advisers. I know that certain people invite you to their houses ‘as friends.’ Don’t believe a word of it; it is a pretext for thirst; their world is not yours. You are at once above and below them; art and society are two parallel lines which can never meet to blend in the course of nature. They are ‘on terms’; they make use of one another; but in reality they cannot amalgamate, having no tastes in common. Artists serve society-ladies as padding for their parties; society is the artist’s client and cash-box. If these ladies ask you ‘as friends,’ why do they make you work? When I ask my doctor to dinner I don’t show him my chilblains at dessert.”

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On an English social custom, “more honoured in the breach than in the observance,” M. Remo has a sharpish word or two to say. “In London drawing-rooms singers are sometimes listened to, whereas instrumentalists, whose performances are the result of long and painful toil, invariably promote conversation. As soon as the piano raises its voice everybody starts talking with surprising unanimity. Lips silent until then, forthwith find plenty to say for themselves. The louder the playing, the noisier the chatter. On one occasion, a pianist having taken a base advantage of his muscular strength by endeavouring to dominate the tumult around him, the lady of the house came up to him and begged him ‘not to play so loud, for her friends positively could not hear themselves speak!’ On another occasion, Silas—a fine player who objects to be used as a stimulant to small-talk—replied to a lady who asked him to ‘play something,’ ‘Really there is no necessity that I should play, as far as I can see; they are well-started, and will talk capitally without my assistance.’” Amateur singing in society fails to secure M. Remo’s undivided approbation. “When,” he asks, “will English amateurs come to understand that before parading their infirmities in public they should serve a serious apprenticeship, in order not to prove a social curse? If their singing, such as it is, amuses them, let them sing to themselves, in their garret or in their coal-cellars, instead of submerging their friends under floods of incapacity! And politeness hinders us from crying aloud for mercy! Hypocrites that we are! Society ought to rise in its wrath and put down these abominations, which interfere with our digestions and tie our nerves up in knots. And yet, as soon as one of those pretty mouths that are intended for kisses rather than for songs begins to hurl outrages on the musical ear, people listen—and listen without laughing! The patience of English folk is something admirable.” . . . “Melenmania is an endemic malady by which English society is chronically afflicted. No one escapes it. Its diagnosis is always of an alarming character, and every remedy hitherto essayed or suggested by science has proved futile.”

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M. Remo is severely down upon the English “goody-gaudy” (*sic*) people who object to music on Sundays, but admits that Londoners are

rapidly emancipating themselves from their prejudices in that direction. He even thinks that, as far as the orgies of sound indulged in on the Sabbath by the Salvation Army in the streets of the metropolis, we carry tolerance beyond reasonable limits. This description of the Army's musical promenades through our principal thoroughfares is remarkably graphic and forcible: "The big drum, brasses, and banners lead the way; the proselytes follow. A man, marching all the while, bellows a sort of sermon in a voice like the blast of a fog-horn. At his heels straggles along a crew of ragamuffins and idlers, and a select company of dirty, dishevelled, unsavoury persons—the men dressed in wrecks of coats, in rebellious waistcoats that refuse to be buttoned, in frames of what were once boots, picked up out of gutters; the women in sordid, anachronistic garments, which look amazed and horrified at being brought into contact with one another, with spectral bonnets above which skeletonian feathers wave grimly, with sexless shoes, and discoloured, filthy shawls. All this human vermin, all this zoology, yelling, screaming, and braying, follows its leaders—the scum of the hulks—into one of the numerous halls, wherein these conscience-botchers drill their recruits and classify their proselytes. These detachments of the Salvation Army are walking advertisements of the tremendous mockery of religion which is permitted in London by those who object to music on Sundays."

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"Music in Fog-Land" abounds in good stories and smart sayings by social humourists of all nations, except the German. The "winged words" of eminent Frenchmen, Italians, Russians, and Englishmen have been deftly caught in their flight by M. Remo and caged in his book. He reports a "memorable aphorism" by Théophile Gautier—"Music is the most expensive and disagreeable of noises"—as having been "thought out in London," and adds that "it logically led him (Gautier) to print the following warning above his poems:—'It is forbidden to deposit any music along these verses.' . . . "When," he avers, "certain young English ladies of fashion, addicted to mangling his romances, ask Paolo Tosti what he thinks of their singing, he replies, 'You dress very well; but you sing very badly.' . . . "Any professor of singing who respects himself is bound to take the predicate of Signor. It is not his real business to be a professor, but to be an Italian. I asked an eminent singing-master one day, 'What is your profession?' 'Italian,' he replied. 'And where were you born?' 'In Belgium!'" . . . "The butler of a great lady of fashion was overheard by her, one day, discussing the vicissitudes of life with a fellow-servant. 'My dear feller,' he ejaculated, 'I am afraid that our people are going in for economy. Only fancy! at the party yesterday evening I see with my own eyes my lady and Miss Hisabel a-playin' on one piano at the same time!'" . . . Some unfamiliar facts about the national music of Scotland and Wales may be culled from M. Remo's chapter on that subject; as, for instance, that the "gig" is a favourite Caledonian dance, performed to the sound of the Jew's-harp or trumpet. "Nothing,"

he continues, "is more curious than Welsh music. When the world was mere chaos, music assumed a regular form in Wales. The Bards, disdainful of the Ark, kept a boat of their own during the Deluge. The melodies sung by King David, as well as the martial lays of the Trojan War, were Welsh tunes. King Arthur of the Round Table was a Welshman; he conquered Europe, lived six hundred years, and composed a symphony." Surely Llyw Llywydd or Pencerdd Gwalia must have been coaching M. Remo for this portion of his musical information! . . . A few of the lively Frenchman's items of "personal information" are worthy of note. He credits us with the possession of a great English baritone, "Stanley, the Faure of Albion;" remarks that "Herbert" Parry is rather dry; speaks with sincere respect of "Sir Arthur Chappell," and with somewhat constrained admiration of the eminent "German conductor, Herr Walter Bache;" mentions "Adelaide Dutchons and Constance Losby" as public singers of well-merited fame; and admits that "The Blind Girl to her Heart" is really a meritorious English romance. He also alludes to Misses Mary Anderson and Fortescue as "pearls of the theatre" in connection with music. But these eccentric *personalia* are rare exceptions to his rule of accuracy, which for the most part is strictly observed in connection with the more intimate details of the book. When so well-informed a writer as M. Remo refers to "Haendel's Elijah" as a sublime oratorio, one cannot help suspecting that a waggish printer must have been the author of that surprising statement. However this may be, no cheerier volume than "Music in Fog-Land" has been published, even in Paris, for many a month past; and I confidently urge its perusal upon all those musicians—native to this soil—who, themselves pachydermatous, delight in seeing the thinner skin of their more sensitive fellow-artists smartly punctured with the keen point, dipped in gall, of a finely-tempered pen.

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On the 4th of last month, at Liverpool, Madame Rôze-Mapleson created the part of Donna Maria, Queen of Spain, in Marchetti's opera, "Ruy Blas," and added another brilliant item to her long list of artistic triumphs. The first production of this pleasing work in its English garb—the less said about which the better, though certain passages of the libretto deserve mention as yielding in no single respect of literary vileness to the choicest ineptitudes of the poet Bunn—took place in the Court Theatre of Liverpool before "a crowded, brilliant, and discriminating house" (I quote from a leading local paper), and "was welcomed with every manifestation of popular approval." Marie Rôze had played her part in America (according to my esteemed Liverpudlian colleague) with the support of Sinico, Campanini, Galassi, and Lablache, "so that the prima donna in this presentation" gave "a matured and ripened reading of the character of the Queen." I did not know that dear old Lablache had ever crossed the Atlantic; anyway, Marie Rôze is but young to have sung with that inimitable basso, whose lamented death took place eight and twenty years ago. The

opera, too, for him to have sung in it, must have been composed in the 'fifties at the very latest; if so, the total omission of its composer's name from the pages of Grove's ponderous Dictionary of Music and Musicians would seem to point to reprehensible negligence on Sir George's part. However this may be, I cannot help thinking it a little ungallant of the musical critic who enriches the columns of the *Liverpool Daily Post* with his accurate retrospects, to carry his readers so very far back in the operatic career of the gifted and beautiful French prima donna. It is, of course, immensely creditable to her to have sung the leading part in an Italian grand opera at the age of ten, and with so great a dramatic vocalist as Lablache; but *cantatrici* are such whimsical creatures, and so difficult to please, that I doubt her gratitude to the *Liverpool Daily Post* for raking up such an old, old story *à son adresse*. To return to the production of "Ruy Blas." Mr. Valentine Smith sustained the title rôle, and, according to the *Liverpool Echo*, "achieved a distinct triumph, bidding fair to become one of the £5,000 a year tenors, for which (*sic*), it is said, there is a demand." You see, never having been to Liverpool or America, I have not heard "Ruy Blas" yet, and so am dependent upon my *confrères* of the Mersey for whatever details of the initial performance I may venture to offer to the readers of THE THEATRE. By one of these gentlemen the music is figuratively described as "somewhat sombre," and "at the end of two of the acts massive in unison with the development of the tragedy." It is pleasant to know from the same authority that "a pretty air ripples through the whole opera," and that Miss Marion Burton "received a reception that can only be characterised as extraordinary." By the way, the critic of the *Liverpool Courier* confidently asserts that Marchetti's opera was first brought out in his native city, Milan, at the Teatro della Scala, on April 3, 1869. How may we reconcile this statement with that advanced by the *Liverpool Daily Post*, which distinctly infers that "Ruy Blas" was performed in the United States fully thirty years ago? When doctors differ . . . It would seem that Signor Marchetti must be an imitative rather than a creative *maestro*, for of the three criticisms of "Ruy Blas" forwarded to me from Liverpool, one describes that work as teeming with reminiscences of Bellini; another observes that it recalls the "methods and ensembles" of Donizetti; and the third lays stress upon its strong resemblance to the melodic manner of Meyerbeer. If these judgments be all equally correct, the music of "Ruy Blas" will probably sound rather familiar in the ears of London opera-goers when Mr. Carl Rosa shall reproduce it at Drury Lane next May. Meanwhile, the quality of its stupendous libretto may be fairly appraised by the following specimen:—*Cantat, Don Sallust:*

Nothing from you there's need to hide,  
Tis the truth he confessed thee;  
With your handmaid as bride  
You once would have blessed me,  
And as lover in turn  
You my lackey must not spurn.

It would be difficult to match these lines, even in the lyrics of "The Bohemian Girl," for grammatical incorrectness, obscurity of meaning, and confusion of persons. I cannot conscientiously congratulate my friend Carl Rosa upon his latest selection in the librettist line.

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Poor Amilcare Ponchielli, who died so unexpectedly the other day, was one of the most absent men in Italy. He was once asked to write a waltz specially for a charity ball, and consented to do so. Looking over his musical memoranda for a *motivo*, he found one, hurriedly noted down by his own hand, that pleased him well. At once he set to work to orchestrate it. That done, he gave out the parts to the instrumentalists hired for the ball, and volunteered to lead them in person when they should play "his new waltz" at the festivity in question. This fact was duly announced, and drew numbers of his friends and admirers to the entertainment. What was everybody's astonishment at recognising in Ponchielli's "novelty" an old familiar waltz by John Strauss, to which all Milan had danced scores of times! Ponchielli had heard it, liked it, written it down from memory, forgotten it, found it, believed that it was his very own, and arranged it for orchestra—I need not say, to his own overwhelming confusion and discomfiture. He lived a long way from the Conservatoire, at which he was one of the professors of harmony. One day, his duties terminated, he had trudged home in the pouring rain. Just as he reached his door, soaked to the skin, he remembered that he had left his umbrella in his class-room. Muttering, "What if it should rain? I should get wet through; I must fetch it,"—he walked all the way back to the Conservatoire, found his umbrella, and hurried home again, bearing it unopened in his hand. On another occasion he attended a concert at Milan, in the programme of which was announced his "Dance of the Hours," out of "Gisconda," for performance at the end of the second part. The first part, however, closed with the Festal March from "Tannhaeuser," which—as usual in Italy—was vehemently applauded; whereupon Ponchielli, aroused from his meditations, arose in his place and bowed gratefully to the audience, fully convinced that his *ballabile* had been played and elicited the plaudits of those present. When his "Promessi Sposi" was produced at the Scala, he rushed upon the stage at the close of the first act—which had been enthusiastically received—to express his delight and gratitude to the *prima donna*, Signora Brambilla (whom he subsequently married, by the way); and, to the amazement of everybody on the stage, threw his arms round the neck of a steady-going old singing-super, grown grey in the service of the impresa, whom he kissed with effusion on both cheeks, exclaiming, "Angel of melody! admirable creature! supreme artist! I thank and adore you!" Milan society teems with kindly reminiscences of "le distrazioni del maestro Amilcare," who was one of the kindest and most amiable

gentlemen, as well as most consummate musicians, of the Land of Song.

On Saturday evening, Feb. 13, a "new and original whimsicality" was produced by Mr. D'Oyly Carte at the Savoy Theatre as a *lever de rideau* to "The Mikado," which still draws remunerative audiences to the home of Gilbertian eccentricities and Sullivan-esque enchantments. The novelty bears the somewhat mysterious title of "The Carp," and is the joint production of Messrs. Frank Desprez and Alfred Cellier,—Englishmen both, although appearances are against them, as far as their patronymics are concerned. It achieved a no less positive than well-deserved success. Mr. Desprez's dialogue is bright and entertaining, whilst his lyrics, in more than one respect, offer a refreshing contrast to the silly, ungrammatical stuff with which some of our so-called comic librettists do not hesitate—for a consideration—to afflict the theatrical public. Graceful and shapely melodies abound in Mr. Cellier's music, which, moreover, is orchestrated with all that delicate taste in the combination and contrast of tone-colours for which this highly-gifted composer is so justly renowned. The plot of "The Carp" is new, ingenious, and pleasantly absurd. It belongs to the realm of Topsyturvydom, and is, therefore, fully entitled to *les droits de domicile* at the Savoy. Unrequited love suggests self-destruction to an agreeable youth and maiden, personally unacquainted with one another, although they have "friends" in common. They gravitate, on suicidal thoughts intent, towards a pond in which a carp, full of years and wiliness, abides. This ancient and astute fish, for years unnumbered (antecedent to the action of the piece) has baffled the piscatorial devices of an elderly angler, bent upon its capture. He is profoundly engaged in one of his periodical attempts to lure the reluctant carp from its native element when the sorrow-laden youth strolls up to the pool-side and announces his intention of making a hole in the water. Piscator beseeches him to forego his dread purpose, at least for a while, lest he alarm the venerable fish—which, with the fatuity of an inveterate angler, he believes himself to be just on the point of catching, though it has successfully defied his skill throughout a period to which the memory of man attaineth not. Whilst the despondent one is waiting for the carp to be caught, the would-be Ophelia appears upon the scene, and is persuaded to put off her apotheosis by the identical plea previously urged upon her companion in misfortune. The two young people linger by the bank and enter into conversation. They soon find out that they know each other's faithless lovers, in abusing whom they find consolation for their woes and partially recover their cheerfulness. Presently, *mirabile dictu*, the carp succumbs to temptation, and is landed. Bearing his captive in triumph, the fisherman advances to inform the youthful pair that the pond is entirely at their disposal; but they have agreed to neutralise their

grieves by combining them, and all ends happily. The three parts are admirably sung and played by Miss Findlay, Mr. Hildesley, and Mr. Eric Lewis. My advice to my readers is *carpe cyprinum*, which may be freely translated, "Go the Savoy and enjoy 'The Carp.'"

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"It is now some twenty long years ago since" Arthur Sullivan asked Alfred Tennyson to write for him the words of a "song-cycle, German fashion." The Laureate complied with his friend's request, and threw off a dozen lyrics, bearing more or less manifest relation to one another. Four years later this "cyklus," set to music by the composer of "Cox and Box," was published by Strahan and Co., under the title of "The Window; or, the Loves of the Wrens." On the 16th ult. seven of its numbers were sung for the first time in public by Mr. Isidore de Lara, in the course of that gentleman's first Spring Vocal Recital at Steinway Hall. The songs are all clever, musicianly, and melodious; two or three of them would have done credit to Robert Schumann. They were favourably received by a "knowledgable" audience, which displayed a marked preference for "Vine, vine and eglantine" and "Light, so low upon earth." It is perhaps superfluous to say that Mr. De Lara sang them to perfection, for his interpretations are always distinguished by high intelligence and delicate refinement; but he happened to be in unusually good voice, and fairly carried away his hearers. What charming songs he always hits upon, too! On the occasion referred to, he introduced an exquisite little gem by Alary, "Colinette," and his own two latest works, "'Twas Eve and May" and "All, my all" (words respectively by Lord Lytton and Miss Probyn), both of which are full of merit and will certainly achieve popularity. Another novelty of his own composition, still in MS., though I see that it is announced in Messrs. Chappell and Co.'s list of new publications, also made its *début* at the recital, and proved a distinct success. Its name is "Marion," and it sparkles with bright, unaffected gaiety. Mr. De Lara also sang—quite inimitably—two of the most beautiful songs with which I am acquainted, Tosti's "Aprile" and Hervey's "Heart of my Heart," in the latter of which he earned a rapturous encore; a canzonet by Salvator Rosa, two old English ballads, Mrs. Moncrieff's graceful serenade "For Old Custom's Sake," and Faure's sly little *chanson* "Le Joli Rêve," with which, as he has often done before, he made a decided hit. A pleasant feature in this exceptionally meritorious afternoon entertainment was the accomplished pianism of Signor Albanesi, who played two clever compositions of his own and Rubinstein's tender Barcarolle with excellent expression and high finish. The hall was crowded; everything went off well; everybody was pleased. Bravo, De Lara!

WM. BEATTY-KINGSTON.



## Our Play=Box.

### "ENEMIES."

A new Comedy-Drama, in five acts, by Charles F. Coghlan, founded on incidents in Georges Ohnet's romance, "La Grande Marnière." Produced at the Prince's Theatre on Thursday, January 28, 1886.

Lord Dunderby .....	Mr. H. KEMBLE	Sheriff's Officer.....	Mr. H. CHAMBERS
The Hon. Arthur Blake ...	Mr. J. CARNE	Head Waiter .....	Mr. MACNAMARA
Sir Manvers Glenn, Bart. ...	Mr. F. EVERILL	1st Waiter .....	Mr. G. DORRELL
Colonel Anderson .....	Mr. J. R. CRAUFORD	2nd Waiter.....	Mr. H. WILSHAW
Captain Percival Glenn ...	Mr. J. G. GRAHAME	Footman.....	Mr. H. BRUNEL
Peter Darvel.....	Mr. J. FERNANDEZ	Joe Heeley .....	Mr. S. CAFFREY
Richard Darvel .....	Mr. COGHLAN	Coot.....	Mr. F. SEYMOUR
Mr. Dornton.....	Mr. P. CLARK	Margaret Glenn .....	Mrs. LANGTRY
Daffy Willie .....	Mr. R. PATEMAN	Aunt Anne .....	Miss R. ERSKINE
Marsh.....	Mr. B. HOLMES	Mrs. Lawler .....	Miss BOWERING
Owler.....	Mr. H. CRISP	Rose Heeley .....	Miss CLITHEROW
Shaw .....	Mr. R. RAIMOND	Martha .....	Miss A. HARDINGE
A Yeoman .....	Mr. WEATHERSBY	Jane .....	Miss BURTON

In dramatising Georges Ohnet's interesting story, "La Grande Marnière," Mr. Coghlan has attempted a most difficult task; novels seldom make good plays, and this drama suffers from too much faithfulness to the original. The long exposition, introducing secondary characters and interests, finds a place fitting enough in the book, but when, on the stage, two acts, divided into five scenes, are devoted to this, the dramatic effect is greatly weakened. This mistake is emphasised by the use of that deplorable modern invention, the tableau curtain; five times during the prologue is the interest thus broken off and arrested, and the drama proper only begins with the third act. The main story is as follows:—Peter Darvel, a self-made man, tradesman and money-lender, has vowed an undying hatred to Sir Manvers Glenn, who in the days of their youth, robbed him of the woman he loved and then deserted her. Since then they have both married and become widowers. Revenge has been the one thought, the one hope of Darvel's life; it is for this that he has toiled and schemed to become rich and powerful. He now holds in his hands a heavy mortgage on the Glenn estate, for the old half-childish Baronet has, by repeated and extravagant expenditure on worthless inventions, brought ruin upon his house. The Baronet has two children, Percival, a not bad-hearted, but violent-tempered fellow, hated by all the poachers of the neighbourhood, and Margaret, a noble, clever girl, loving to her headstrong brother, full of almost motherly tenderness for her weak father. Proud where the honour of her family is at stake, she has been the one prop of the tottering house; she has secretly sacrificed the money left to her by her mother in order to ward off ruin, but at last all is at an end—the day of reckoning is at hand. Peter Darvel holds his enemy in his cruel grasp, and prepares to crush him unmercifully. But this is not all: the Glenns are threatened in the honour of their name, far dearer to them than wealth or position; a village girl, daughter of a poacher who

has a grudge against Percival, and to whom Margaret's brother has shown marked attention, has been strangled by a deaf and dumb idiot, and as the handkerchief found round her neck is one that had been given to her by Percival, he is arrested on charge of murder. Who is to rescue them from this desperate situation? Darvel has one son, Richard, who has always refused to associate himself with his father's schemes of vengeance; an eminent barrister, he has been away for some years in America, and has amassed a fortune, which makes him independent of his father. On his return to his native provincial town, he has accidentally met Margaret, and his heart has gone out to her; he loves her with all the intensity of a generous nature, who has found no responding feeling in his home, and who knows his love is hopeless. And Margaret, though her pride refuses to acknowledge it, she too loves this man whom she would wish to hate. Yet, for her father's, for her brother's sake, however painful the effort, she will humble herself to him, and she implores him to influence his father to spare them. To promise this is beyond Richard's power, but he vows to save them, and accomplishes this by paying off the mortgage himself, and by defending Percival at the trial and proving his innocence. For this he is discarded by his father, but an ultimate reconciliation takes place. Margaret, love triumphing at last over both pride and hate, consents to become Richard's wife, and the old enemies are made friends.

Such is the story; one calculated to enlist the sympathy of an audience, and powerful enough to be dramatically effective if Mr. Coghlan had been bold enough in treatment and not wasted so much time over the earlier scenes of the book. First he introduces us to Darvel in his office, where he makes him relate to his son the history of his hate; next he gives us the first meeting of Margaret and Richard on the moor (an admirable stage picture). Unconscious of each other's identity, they exchange a few words, an irresistible feeling of sympathy seems to draw them together; he lingers by her side, and she does not wish him gone, but on learning his name her pleasant manner suddenly changes to the deepest scorn. To my mind, this scene would be more effective if, as in the novel, it came first; it would be all the better if the spectators became interested in this dawn of love before knowing of the feud between the families. Darvel's story might be told here (there is no special reason why father and son should not meet on the moor), and it would doubly jar on Richard's feelings when he was still entranced by Margaret's beauty and charm, and was smarting under the thought that his father's persecution of the Glenns had made him an object of abhorrence to her. The scenes of the subordinate characters in this act would gain by compressing. The second act might, I think, be cut out altogether. Admirably staged as are these three scenes, they are far too long. Percival's insult to Richard in no way helps the story, and Rose's murder might as well be simply related in the third act. In this, at last, the action is started; it moves swiftly, and consequently the acting is far more effective. Mrs. Langtry has little to do up to this time, but here she fairly surprises us by the dramatic power she displays. Margaret Glenn is her first original

character, and undoubtedly her best achievement. In the earlier part of this act, she does not sufficiently abandon herself to the situation, and her tone is somewhat unreal; but as the events press on she becomes more earnest. After her brother's arrest, when Darvel comes to take possession of his enemy's house and insults him, when Margaret, half mad with grief and wrath—for she had hoped to keep her father in ignorance of the shame and sorrow about to fall on them—when, I say, she impulsively strikes Darvel to stop his words, the actress here shows an intensity that deserves the highest praise. The fourth act is the best of all; it contains the two greatest scenes of the play, and there is not a word that is out of its place, or that one could wish cut out. It is here that Margaret makes the appeal to her lover's generosity; how deeply moving it is! The girl terribly anxious to win him to her cause, and yet in her pride fearing to show how she is drawn towards him. How bitterly her words affect him when she offers to give up all that is left to them to his father if he will only save her brother: and when she holds out her hand to him in repentance for having wounded him, and he vows to dedicate himself to her service—how well this is interpreted by Mrs. Langtry and Mr. Coghlan! One fault only I can find in her rendering of this scene—there is not enough of the under-current of tenderness. This is followed by the moral duel between father and son, ending by Darvel swearing that he will carry out his revenge on his enemies to the bitter end, and Richard making a vow that he will save them. Mr. Coghlan and Mr. Fernandez are admirable in this most powerful scene. To Mr. Fernandez falls the most difficult character in the drama, and his impersonation is most artistic, finished, and natural. The last act, like most final acts, unfortunately, is not quite so good; it is weaker, and Margaret's conversation with her brother is rather frivolous for one who has been so tried. We lose the charming scene of the novel where Margaret, hearing that Richard is about to leave the country, too proud to ask her hand in return for his devotion, seeks him and asks him to stay for her sake; but this would have necessitated another tableau. The equivalent scene is satisfactory enough, though by no means so moving; and as Mr. Coghlan chose to reconcile the enemies, he could not have done it better than in the way selected by himself. The minor characters are well sustained; Miss Clara Clitherow shows much promise, and Miss Robertha Erskine and Miss Bowering are very good. An especial word of praise must be given to Mr. J. G. Grahame for his manly, easy, and natural impersonation of Percival, and in a different style to the capital bit of character acting of Mr. Frank Seymour, and the part of the mute, a dangerous one, is in very safe hands with such an artiste as Mr. R. Pateman. The scenery and stage-management are excellent. And, despite its many faults, there is success in the drama if Mr. Coghlan has the courage to use the pruning knife freely; we want more of Margaret and Richard, and fewer tableaux.

MARIE DE MENSIAUX.

### “ANTOINETTE RIGAUD.”

A new comedy, in three acts, written by RAYMOND DESLANDES, translated by ERNEST WARREN.  
Produced at the St. James's Theatre on Saturday, February 13, 1886.

General de Préfond ...	Mr. HARE.	Corporal Pierre ...	Mr. R. CATHCART.
Rigaud... ...	Mr. BARNES.	Jean ...	Mr. DE VERNEY.
Henri de Tourvel ...	Mr. KENDAL.	Antoinette Rigaud ...	Mrs. KENDAL.
Paul Sannoy ...	Mr. HERBERT WARING.	Marie de Préfond ...	Miss LINDA DIETZ.
Bernardet ...	Mr. HENDRIE.	Madame Bernardet...	Miss WEBSTER.
Mons. de Rochard ...	Mr. PAGET.	Madame Rochard ...	Miss ANNIE ROSE.

Although produced at the Comèdie Française on September 30, 1885, “Antoinette Rigaud” made very little stir in Paris. Written by Deslandes, a popular man, a well-known dramatist, and now the manager of the Vaudeville Theatre, it was generally thought that the play, one of mere action, was out of place at the house of Molière, where, as a rule, the subscribers are treated to works of thought and genius. The mere story-teller for the stage has hitherto had no place at the Théâtre Français. And there is, after all, little in Antoinette Rigaud save the clever arrangement of old dramatic material, the exciting recital of a well-worn stage story. The veterans of Molière’s house shirked the new play. Got, Delaunay, and Mounet Sully would have nothing to do with it. Coquelin was not in the cast. Neither Blanche Pierson or Bartet were asked to play the heroine, who was left to Madame Worms Baretta, an actress of only average merit. Two sociétaires figured in the cast, Febvre and Worms, both excellent actors, and the play succeeded mainly through their assistance. Antoinette Rigaud is a charming woman who has a brother somewhat of a prig, who is aide-de-camp to an old General, Préfond. She has married a plain practical man mainly to relieve her brother, who is not rich, of the responsibility of her maintenance, and having married for money and not for love, the priggish brother cannot understand that her heart is a little sad, and that she occasionally sighs for sympathy. Prigs of this pattern, who are as inanimate as a jelly fish, never can understand such a thing. But they are often deceived, and have their eyes opened. Antoinette meets a young artist who is sympathetic to her. She feels he is a contrast to the burly, loud-talking fellow who crushes down her finer susceptibilities, and she is attracted to him. There is no harm in the flirtation, she desires to be rid of the consequences of it, but she is agitated when she discovers the young artist present at the General’s country house. That very evening she had escaped there for a change during her husband’s absence from town. It is the old story. Antoinette wants back her compromising love letters, and the artist hesitates to part with them. However, he relents, and is foolish enough to take them to Antoinette’s room when all the household have retired for the night. Innocently enough, he compromises the woman for whom he has a sincere respect. But this is not all. Antoinette and her discarded lover are conversing together when the house is alarmed by an arrival. Antoinette’s husband has turned up

in the middle of the night. It is extremely inconvenient, but husbands insist on coming back in the night, particularly in plays. For the artist there is no escape, so he is hidden in the wife's bedroom while her hungry husband discusses his supper and the divorce case on which he has sat as a juror. A husband had killed the wife who deceived him, and he was unanimously acquitted by a jury of husbands. All this terrifies poor Antoinette Rigaud. She becomes livid with fear, and, feigning a headache, gets her husband into his dressing-room whilst she smuggles away the artist into the corridor, forgetting in her fright that for him there is no escape, as the wing in which their apartments are situated is locked off from the rest of the house. Only the General's daughter and the Rigauds sleep in this wing. Suddenly in rushes Rigaud with the alarming announcement that a man has jumped from an adjoining window. The artist has madly escaped through the bedchamber of the General's daughter. Such things do happen in real life, for was not there a divorce case the other day where a sick nurse, watching a dying patient, was surprised by the appearance of a man through the window with his coat on his arm and without his boots! He was a co-respondent escaping from an infuriated husband by means of the balcony. It is a mistake to suppose that the escaping balcony is a device solely and wholly used by French dramatists. The scene of the modern co-respondent's escape was the Warwick Road, Pimlico, and not only did the gentleman escape through one house but the lady actually escaped through the other. That was worthy of a Criterion farce. Who shall say what suggestions are not given by romances of the Antoinette Rigaud order. Indiscreet gentlemen are always coming to ladies bedrooms at inopportune moments at the St. James's Theatre. Mrs. Kendal is continually attacked in this unseemly fashion. Yesterday in "Mayfair," to-day in "Antoinette Rigaud."

The next morning all conclusively points to Antoinette's guilt. The locket she has given to her lover and denied to her husband is found in the garden, and, to shield his sister's honour, the young officer declares that he is the culprit, and has outraged the confidence of the old General. It is a storm, however, in a tea cup, for Antoinette confesses the truth to the General, and saves her brother's reputation. Her secret is respected, but what her husband thinks about it all we are not even distantly informed.

The play is admirably acted by Mr. and Mrs. Kendal, Mr. Hare, Miss Linda Dietz, and Mr. Barnes. The fine and vivid emotional acting of Mrs. Kendal, the vigour of Mr. Kendal, the polish of Mr. Hare, the gentle art of Miss Dietz, and the fresh, natural manner of Mr. Barnes as the prosy husband have not been excelled in the annals of one of the best comedy companies London has ever seen. Better acting cannot be found at any theatre in Paris.

## “ENGAGED.”

An original farcical comedy, in three acts, by W. S. GILBERT.

Produced at the Haymarket Theatre, on, Wednesday, October 3, 1877. Revived at the Court Thea're, on November 30, 1881. Again revived, at the Haymarket Theatre, on Wednesday, February 17, 1886.

	HAYMARKET (1877).	COURT (1881).	HAYMARKET (1886).
Cheviot Hill ... ...	Mr. GEORGE HONEY.	Mr. HENRY J. BYRON.	Mr. H. BEERBOHM-TREE.
Belvawney ... ...	Mr. KYRLE BELLEW.	Mr. KYRLE BELLEW.	Mr. MAURICE BARRYMORE.
Mr. Symperson ... ...	Mr. H. HOWE.	Mr. CLIFFORD COOPER.	Mr. MACKINTOSH.
Angus Macalister ...	Mr. DEWAR.	Mr. W. H. DENNY	Mr. CHARLES BROOKFIELD.
Major McGillicuddy ...	Mr. WEATHERSBY.	Mr. GILBERT TRENT.	Mr. ULLICK WINTER.
Belinda Treherne ...	Miss MARION TERRY.	Miss MARION TERRY.	Mrs. H. BEERBOHM-TREE.
Minnie ... ...	Miss LUCY BUCKSTONE.	Miss CARLOTTA ADDISON.	Miss ADOUSTA WILTON.
Mrs. Macfarlane ...	Miss EMILY THORNE.	Miss EMILY THORNE.	Mrs. E. H. BROOKE.
Maggie ... ...	Miss JULIA STEWART.	Miss ADELA MEASOR.	Miss ROSE NORREYS.
Parker ... ...	Miss JULIA ROSELLA.	Miss L. MEREDITH.	Miss RUSSELL HUDDART,

The revival of “Engaged” at the Haymarket, at which theatre it first appeared, will surely be welcomed by all who care for a smart, witty, and, what is far more rare, a humorous farcical comedy. Doubtless Mr. Gilbert’s play will disappoint those people who like the salacious impossibilities of the adaptations from the French, which have found so much favour with the public in recent years; but one may not be without hope that there are playgoers who care to see an amusing comedy to which they can take their children without fear of contamination, and whose tastes lead them to prefer epigram before dirt. The taste for Mr. Gilbert’s stage-work may be compared to that for olives or caviare; it must be innate in the hearer, for the very simple reason that the said work is wholly original, and, to carry out the gastronomic simile, it may be added that it has a perfectly distinctive flavour of its own. And of all Mr. Gilbert’s works, “Engaged” is the most Gilbertian. To hear it or to read it is like beginning your study of Carlyle with “Sartor Resartus,” and if you can see the humour and appreciate the topsy-turveydom to which you are introduced, you may consider yourself free, so to speak, of Mr. Gilbert’s intellectual “Palace of Truth” for evermore. I use the words “Palace of Truth” advisedly, for assuredly no writer has ever laid bare with a keener scalpel the sham and pretension that underlies the society of to-day. That cynicism is the keynote of “Engaged.” Some people do not see it; they prefer to find “larky” wives waiting for the return of peccant husbands, while attendant lovers hover round them, and parody the revelations of the divorce court. *Non olet*, &c., and such pieces pay; but, without any of the affectation of a purist, one may surely turn to Mr. Gilbert’s brilliant play and be thankful that it is clean.

“Engaged” has been represented at the Haymarket, the Court, and in the provinces; but I may be allowed to say ditto to Mr. Clement Scott as to the way in which the principal character, Cheviot Hill, has been enacted. Mr. Honey, who first appeared in the part, was grotesque and fairly amusing, but he had evidently formed no definite idea of it; while Mr. Byron, who appeared in the last London revival, was equally “at sea.” The latest exponent, Mr. Beerbohm-

Tree, is an actor of acknowledged ability, a man who is above all things a delineator of character, and high hopes were entertained of his performance. In two words, he failed. He was Beerbohm-Tree, and not Cheviot Hill, and his remarkable power of self-effacement—that is to say, of impersonation—seemed on this occasion to have deserted him. The part was, I believe, written for Mr. Sothern, who, in his best days, would have played it well; not so well, however, as Mr. Charles Wyndham could play it now, should he ever appear in it. Mr. Barrymore's Belvawney was fairly amusing, but he seemed afraid, as the phrase runs, of letting himself go. Mr. Mackintosh was a humorous Mr. Symperson, and Mr. Brookfield as clever as he always is as Angus Macalister; he might, however, in his ardour for realism, have spared us reminiscences of "The Caledonian Cremona." With a vivid recollection of Miss Marion Terry in the part, I have nothing but praise for Mrs. Beerbohm-Tree's Belinda. She caught the mock-heroic spirit of the part to perfection, and played with a firmer touch and more force than she has yet exhibited. It was a sound and artistic bit of stage work. Miss Augusta Wilton was a pretty and *piquante* Minnie Symperson; and Miss Norreys looked the part of Maggie, though I am sorry to say I could not understand a word of her Scotch. She is hardly to be blamed, however, for—while I can boast of some acquaintance with Scotsmen and their mode of speaking—the dialect of the actors in the play, which was supposed to be Scotch, was as much like Dutch as genuine Doric.

H. SAVILE CLARKE.

### "THE LORD HARRY."

A new and original romantic play, in five acts, by HENRY ARTHUR JONES and WILSON BARRETT.  
Produced at the Princess's Theatre on Thursday, February 18, 1886.

The Lord Harry Bendish	Mr. WILSON BARRETT.	Shekeniah Pank...	... ...	Mr. CHARLES COOTE.
Esther Breane	Miss EASTLAKE.	Sergeant Wilkins...	... ...	Mr. H. de SOLLA.
Captain Ezra Promise	Mr. E. S. WILLARD.	Sir Humphrey Hinton	... ...	Mr. C. FULTON.
Colonel David Breane	Mr. J. H. CLYNDNS.	Colonel John Wingrove	... ...	Mr. H. EVANS.
Mike Seecombe...	Mr. CHARLES HUDSON.	Captain Valentine Damerel	... ...	Mr. S. CARSON.
Tribulation Tyzack...	Mr. GEORGE BARRETT.	Sentry	... ...	Mr. FIELD.
Gilead Tysack	Mr. H. BERNAGE.	Dorothy	... ...	Miss LOTTIE VENNE.
Captain Christian Rust...	Mr. W. A. ELLIOTT.	Dame Tillett	... ...	Mrs. F. HUNTLEY.
Master Mansty	Mr. P. BARRINGTON.			

"The Lord Harry" comes as a disappointment to those who are acquainted with the previous work, either in collaboration or otherwise, of Mr. Henry Arthur Jones. "The Silver King" is a capital play of its kind, admirably constructed, and based upon a novel and original foundation. "Saints and Sinners" tells a touching story, and contains several graphic sketches of character. Again, "Hoodman Blind" is a powerful, absorbing melodrama. On the other hand, "The Lord Harry" contains little that calls for commendation. Its story is thin to the extreme, and could be told in a breath, while the action, which hardly ever carries the spectator out of himself, practically finishes in the third of the five acts, leaving scene after scene, of little relevancy, to be presented. It may be as well to relate the exact manner in which the story of the love of a Royalist for a Puritan maiden is presented. The first scene depicts the Royalist camp near Zoyland Castle, on the Dorsetshire coast. The sources of the

besiegers are nearly exhausted, and for this reason the Royalists fear that they must withdraw unless the besiegers are in worse plight than themselves. How is the necessary knowledge to be obtained? Lord Harry Bendish, a dare-devil favourite, determines to obtain it, so he disguises himself as a Puritan, and thus gets admission to Zoyland Castle. Loyalty to his cause is not the only motive which induces Lord Harry to thus risk his life, for he is in love with Esther Breane, the fair daughter of the commander of the besieged town. He enters the castle successfully, the first act terminating with his meeting with Esther. What is to follow is patent to those not gifted with much insight. The Lord Harry is recognised, and condemned to death, and he is saved from this punishment by Esther Breane, who bribes the jailor, provides Lord Harry with a stout bar of iron, with which he shatters the bars of his cell window through which he escapes, thanks to a rope-ladder, also provided by Esther. Thus ends Act 2. The play practically terminates in the next act. The Lord Harry is decoyed into visiting Esther late at night, the town is entered by the Royalist army, and in a gratuitous scene of noise, gunpowder, and smoke, Esther and her lover and father are seen—by those of quick eye—making good their escape. The remainder of the play is occupied by the adventures of the fugitives. They are seen on the roof of a flooded cottage, where they are attacked by enemies who fire on them with unloaded muskets, and then land and chase them round the chimney top, the trio once more escaping in the boat of their enemies, who are left checkmated on the roof of the cottage. Adventures of a somewhat similar nature occur in the last act, the Lord Harry and Esther once more escaping, and so the play might go on for ever, but for the limits of time which require that a theatrical manager must not detain his audience long after eleven at night. It will thus be seen that "The Lord Harry" possesses no great originality of plot, no stirring situation, and but little action. Mr. Wilson Barrett acts the hero with wonderful energy, and looks particularly well in his new part, and Miss Eastlake plays the Puritan maiden with great tenderness. But, truth to tell, this is not a good acting play, and such able artists as Mr. E. S. Willard, Mr. J. H. Clyndes, Mr. George Barrett, and Miss Lottie Venne have parts which do not afford them any opportunity for distinction.



## Our Omnibus=Box.

I return to Mr. John Coleman's "Memoirs of Samuel Phelps," which have amused me vastly. They will not alter my opinion in the least concerning the sterling stuff that was contained in the mind and body of that fine, rugged old actor, the Sir Pertinax, the Sir Peter, the Richelieu, the Cardinal Wolsey, the Job Thornbury, the Bottom, whom we all knew in our boyhood days; but the biographer of Samuel Phelps, unintentionally, no doubt, gives me the strangest impression of a man who was once a childhood's idol. I first saw Shakespeare—it was the play of "Hamlet"—in the pit of Sadlers Wells, for the playhouse presided over by Phelps bordered on my father's parish, situated in the New North Road, Hoxton. Surely no one has championed his profession more valiantly than Mr. John Coleman; whenever anyone dared to attack it he has drawn his sword. Did anyone dare to say an actor ever swore a round oath, or used brutal language either on the stage or in private, he would run the risk of receiving a challenge from the excellent John Coleman. If anyone at any time ventured to assert that actors of the past were selfish, inconsiderate, vain, caring for themselves and for no human being besides, placing themselves first and foremost with utter disregard to the success of the play, disinclined to help any manager or author for the sake of art and art alone, who would have protested more than the valiant Mr. John Coleman? And yet, when he tells us about Sam Phelps, he strives to interest us in the great ones of another era by the strangest anecdotes couched in the strongest language. Are these fair specimens of the art-feeling of the revered Samuel Phelps and the idolised William Charles Macready? I trust not, but they stand on record and are published by one who knew him and cherishes his memory.

Phelps, actor-like, speaks with unaccountable bitterness about "bad parts":—

"The rest, the home surroundings, and the permanent income made me swallow some bitter pills during my first season, but when at the opening of the second season I found Vandenhoff engaged to open in Coriolanus, and myself cast Tullus Aufidius, *I felt myself wronged*. I remonstrated. As a sweetener I got Leonatus Posthumus for my second part.

"A week afterwards, 'Mac' took me out of Othello, which he played himself, with Vandenhoff for Iago. A week later up went 'The Tempest,' and I found myself cast for that dismal duffer, *Antonio*. Then came that bundle of dry bones, *Cato* (Isn't it astonishing that such turgid stuff should

ever have had such a vogue?), and I was condemned to lift up Vandenhoff's tail in Marcus.

"All this I bore as well as I could, till I actually found myself taken out of Jaffier (my opening part in the preceding season) and little Elton put over my head. My discontent then became unbearable. At this very moment I got an offer to star in Manchester and Liverpool, and I made up my mind to accept it."

Subsequently Phelps says of Macready, his friend and patron :

"I then acted Othello with the same degree of success. 'Venice Preserved' was so highly spoken of and enquired for that he was obliged to do it a second time, but would not play in the piece himself. So *weak a man is he* that he cannot bear the idea of sharing the honour of a night with anyone."

This "weak man" Macready was the very man who lent Phelps the sum of £450 without requiring any security whatever. Phelps was hardly grateful, for he had scarcely acknowledged this godsend, as he calls it, when he wrote as follows of the good fellow who had helped him in his distress :

"The only thing to accentuate the altered relations between Macready and myself was that he became a little less grim and a little more considerate than usual. For all that, I had some bitter, bad parts to play."

Phelps speaks again :

"Conspicuous among the great events of the season was the production of 'Richelieu,' in which I had another bitter, bad part to play of a few lines, *that old thief, Joseph*.

"At length we reached the last scene. You remember *that beast of a Joseph* has only one good line, a line which usually elicits a great round of applause, and I flattered myself I should certainly have them there." (Phelps again speaks.) "Three nights afterwards I was cast for *that detestable Beauseant* in 'The Lady of Lyons.'

"Thus bad begins, but worse remains behind. Imagine my mortification when I found myself in the very theatre where I had opened in Shylock, where I had made my mark and been 'starred' as Hamlet and Richard—condemned repeatedly to Antonio—the Ghost and Henry VI. to Macready and Kean. 'Tis true I played Jacques and Master Walter with Ellen Tree; but they don't count for much, and my original part was a very bad one—Onslow in Bulwer Lytton's play, 'The Sea Captain.'

"Charles Mathews jibbed at Fag, but he did him for all that, and did him a deuced sight better than he could have done Jack Absolute; but he kicked awfully at Roderigo, but he had to do him, and a precious mess he made of the part."

"I don't think Anderson swallowed Octavius Cæsar with avidity, and I am sure Helen Faust didn't gush at Portia (Brutus Portia), nor was Mrs. Warner particularly *entêté* with the Queen of France, a part of twenty lines in 'Henry the Fifth.' In fact, we all growled, but we all submitted. Vandenhoff was chief growler in the chorus, Warde followed suit in Williams, Elton as Exeter, Anderson as Gower (a part of thirty lines),

and I growled as loud as any one as the Constable of France. But our discontent was the public gain, for it was certainly a magnificent production. We've none of us been able to touch it, or even come within a hundred miles of it since."

Macready sums up the personal question in a very curious and original fashion. Hear what he says:—"He growled—

"Are you an ass, or do you take me for one? Do you imagine that after fighting all these years I'm going to abdicate for the purpose of putting you or any other man in my place? Are you aware of the struggle I had to hold my own against Young, Charles Kemble, and Kean? Of the degradation I had to encounter in being compelled to play second fiddle to that amateur boy, Booth, to whose Lear they made me play Edmund—me, William Charles Macready! No, my dear fellow, watch and wait your chance. It's sure to come some time, perhaps when you least expect it; anyhow, to cut and run would look like failure!"

"Cut and run," said I; "well—

'He who runs away  
May live to fight another day.'

"That's true," rejoined Mac., "but he who won't remain in the field of battle may change defeat to victory at any moment. Here, now—come, come, don't talk nonsense, and we'll see if we can't make matters a little more pleasant for you."

"So, after all, fortunately for myself, as it turned out ultimately, I concluded to remain."

How very small this is, how extremely undignified!

It was not until many years later than this when we saw the Comédie Française in London, an institution based on a different system, where actors and actresses were content to take the smallest characters for the glory of Molière. Racine and Corneille, Got and Coquelin, Bressant and Delaunay did not curse and swear and damn one another's eyes because they were occasionally cast for subordinate characters in great plays. What would have been thought of a French actor in the house of Molière who, when asked to play the Ghost in "*Hamlet*" by one William Shakespeare, replied:—"Well, d—n your impudence!" Yet this is what Mr. Coleman reports Phelps did to Fechter.

Mr. Coleman commences his memoirs with an induction which is interesting, but, I regret to state, deplorably inaccurate. I have spent the best part of an afternoon in correcting the first few pages. It is gravely asserted that "*The Secretary*," by Sheridan Knowles, and the burlesque, "*Fortunio*," by Planché, were brought out at Drury Lane on the same night. "I can remember though it was yesterday when the curtain rose."

Unfortunately Mr. Coleman is wrong in his facts.

"*Fortunio*" was produced on Easter Monday, April 17, 1843, but was preceded by "*Macbeth*," not by "*The Secretary*" at all. Mr. Coleman could not possibly have seen the new play by Sheridan Knowles on this eventful evening, for it was not produced until the 29th April, 1843. The young light comedy "*Lord*," played by Hudson, the Irish comedian,

"whose name I can't remember," was Lord Sherbrooke, since adopted by Robert Lowe when he accepted a peerage. Sheridan Knowles's plays are printed with the original casts attached, and published by the Messrs. Routledge. Anyone can buy them for a few shillings. According to Mr. Coleman "Miss Helen Faucit and Mrs. Warner were both in the piece." The published book of plays says that the only two women in "The Secretary" were played by Miss Helen Faucit and Mrs. Wigan. It may be interesting to supply the rest of the speech containing the words, "A maid should be an icicle," with which the "beautiful young creature made music."

"If I remember rightly, it was a poor play," observed the tall and stately lady, who had been supremely lovely in her youth.

"I thought," I replied, "it was a noble one, for it revealed to me a new world—a world of poetry and beauty."

The "noble play" ran for two nights. However, now for the icicle:—

"All's wrong! A maid should be an icicle,  
Yielding but drop by drop—and then with chilling  
Cold to the last. Melting not of herself  
But 'gainst her nature—then she's worth the thawing.  
Frankness in her is not a virtue, or  
'Tis one that will undo her. She should go  
Without a heart! It is her poverty  
To have one!"

What sublime poetry, and how elegantly the blank verse rings, does it not? What a superb line—

"Frankness in her is not a virtue, or."

How well they wrote poetry in the good old days; didn't they?

"Yielding but drop by drop—and then with chilling."

Hey day! Surely there is a foot too much in this blank verse line. Is there not, Mr. Sheridan Knowles? And where is the elegance, where the graceful rhythm, where the desirable cœsura in this brilliant example of "a world of poetry and beauty"?

What a line!

"But 'gainst her nature—then she's worth the thawing."

Again a foot too much. Thank goodness, Tennyson has written the "Idylls of the King," to show us what blank verse is. It is certainly not dull, bald prose, cut into unequal lengths after the Sheridan Knowles plan.

But it is to be feared that the biographer of Samuel Phelps has little ear for verse. If ever there was a neat and elegant writer of lyrics, it was J. Robinson Planché. He would have shuddered had he seen how he was misquoted in connection with Fortunio. Mr. Coleman can remember, as though it were yesterday, when the curtain rose on "Fortunio," and Hudson sang "a parody" on the well-known song, "In the days that we went gipsyng." Mr. Coleman must have been very late that memorable evening, for Mr. Hudson did not sing the song until the third scene, and in the middle of it.

What he did not do was to sing words that Planché never wrote, or could have written. The idea of Planché ever committing himself to—

“In the days that we got tipsy *in*—a long time ago,  
We drank champagne from *glasses* long,  
And hock from *glasses* green,  
*In* the days that we got tipsy *in*—a long time ago.”

This is what Planché wrote (*vide* his published plays—subscriber's copy) :—

Oh ! the days that we got tipsy *in*—a long time ago,  
Were certainly the jolliest a man could ever know.  
We drank champagne from glasses long, and hock from goblets green,  
And nothing like a cup of tea was ever to be seen ;  
All night we passed the wine, nor dreamed of Hyson or Pekoe,  
*In* the days that we got tipsy *in* a long time ago.

The biographer can remember “Priscilla Horton as Fortunio filling the stage with sunshine whenever she appeared.” She was the legitimate successor of Madame Vestris, and afterwards became Mrs. German Reed. “I can hear her magnificent voice now as she sang :—

“My father, dear, oh ! rest thee here  
While I do put a light silk pair of tight  
Et ceteras on below.  
Oh ! if I look but half as well in male attire  
As he I saw the other night upon the wire,  
Oh ! what an angel I should be.”

Oh, dear no ! Mr. Planché wrote nothing of the kind. His versification was neatness itself. Listen to this :—

Now rest thee here,  
My father dear.  
Hush ! hush ! for up I go  
To put a light  
Silk pair of tight  
Et ceteras on below.  
Oh ! if I look in male attire  
But half as well as he  
I saw one night dance on the wire,  
What an angel I should be.

Does anyone remember, I wonder, what the *Sunday Times* thought of Macready in 1843, at the close of a celebrated season :—

That Mr. Macready's speculation has been unprofitable has been the natural result of his own incapacity and of his obstinate adherence to his own opinions. He has those about him who could enlighten him on subjects of which he is profoundly ignorant, but they either will not or dare not. He has followed the dictates of his own judgment ; he has had not only his own way, but his own way of having it, and is, in this merry month of June (1843), the oldest spoiled child breathing. That he has lost his money grieves, but does not surprise us. A manager, to be successful, should act but little : it is his province to profit by the acting of others. In the selection of dramas Mr. Macready looked only to himself ; the play that could not become a medium for his histrionic displays was no play for him. Putting his enormous egotism aside, Mr. Macready is physically and mentally unfitted for a theatre ; his nervous irritability and his infirmity of temper render him incapable of becoming a successful manager. It is rumoured that he proceeds to America. He

visited the land of Jonathan some years since, and was successful ; he has now achieved a more glorious name, and will, no doubt, be warmly welcomed. If he can manage to lay in a stock of amenity amid his other ship stores, it may prove serviceable, not only whilst on board, but when he reaches the Columbian shore. Her Majesty visits Drury on Monday, and it is probable that the season may be prolonged for some few nights.

In this memorable season of the “palmy days” was produced Westland Marston’s “Patrician’s Daughter,” which ran for seven nights ; a play called “Athelwold,” produced on the occasion of Helen Faucit’s benefit, which ran two nights ; Robert Browning’s “Blot on the ‘Scutcheon,’” which ran for three nights, produced simultaneously with the farce called “The Thumping Legacy,” which was an enormous success.

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I gladly insert the following letter :—

“SIR,—You have done me neither more nor less than simple justice by stating in your review of my Phelps book that ‘if anything has left a sting it is by accident.’

“ You have, however, arrived at an erroneous impression as to my appreciation of Charles Fechter.

“ I never represented him to be ‘a bumptious blockhead.’ I have never insinuated, far less asserted, that his ability could be called in question ‘because he had dared to play Hamlet.’ I travelled four hundred miles to see his first performance of the noble Dane, and was impressed and delighted. Prior to that I came from Edinburgh to London to see his first night of *Ruy Blas*, a divine performance, but not one whit better than Caroline Heath’s *Isabella de Neubourg* and Walter Lacey’s *Don Salluste*.

“ I think I appreciated this admirable work even more highly when I saw Sara Bernhardt and her troop of barn-door fowl attempt this play two years ago. I never saw Fechter do anything in my life, even when I occasionally thought his judgment at fault (as in *Othello*), which did not interest and delight me.

“ My account of his last performance of *Hamlet* at the Lyceum merely records an historical fact of which I was an eye-witness, and in no way detracts from my estimation of this great actor’s genius, or my affectionate regard for his memory—a regard enhanced by years of friendly intimacy—and by the regret I must ever feel for his untimely death.

“ Yours faithfully,

“ JOHN COLEMAN.

“ Junior Garrick Club,  
“ February 18th, 1886.”

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“Shakespearean Scenes and Characters” is the title of a sumptuous volume, the text of which has been written by Austin Brereton, to be published next month by Messrs. Cassell. The scope of the volume may be gathered from an extract from the preface. “My object,” says Mr. Brereton, “in writing the text which accompanies the engravings here illustrating twenty-nine of Shakespeare’s plays has

been to give, in a concise form, an account of the stage-history of each play, together with a note of the most famous representatives of the principal parts in these plays. The history of the connection of these plays with the stage, and of the chief actors in them, has accordingly been related for a period extending over two centuries; from the time, in short, of Betterton's Hamlet to that of the last Shakespearean revival at the Lyceum under the management of Henry Irving. An attempt has also been made to include in these pages a record of the achievements of the greater American actors, and, besides, to give a note on the productions of Shakespeare's works in the United States." The idea of the book, it will be seen, is at least novel. The illustrations comprise thirty steel plates and ten wood engravings, after drawings by Frank Dicksee, A.R.A., Solomon Hart, R.A., J. McL. Ralston, H. C. Selous, J. D. Watson, Charles Green, Fred. Barnard, W. Ralston, A. Hopkins, Val Bromley, A. Fredericks, M. E. Edwards, and others. The volume, which is dedicated to Henry Irving, should prove unusually interesting to lovers of Shakespeare and the stage.

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Miss Mary Rorke, whose photograph as Lina Nelson in "The Harbour Lights" appears in this number of THE THEATRE, was born in Westminster. As already related in the pages of this magazine, she entered the theatrical profession, at an early age, in 1874, playing at the Crystal Palace and at the Croydon Theatre. She then appeared in a small part in "Maids of Honour" at the Holborn Theatre, subsequently acting Sophie Crackthorpe in "The Wedding March" at the Haymarket Theatre. She gained much experience during a stay of eight months at the Prince of Wales Theatre, Liverpool, and, returning to London, she played Fanny Bunter in "New Men and Old Acres" at the Court Theatre. Miss Rorke then returned to the Haymarket for a short season. The latter engagement was followed by a long one at the Criterion, in the course of which she played the heroine in "Meg's 'Diversion,'" Mrs. Dorothy Sterry in "Truth," Carrie Dalrymple in "Jilted," Mrs. MacManus in "Betsy," Florence in "Verbum Sap.," Dagmar in "Where's the Cat?" Dorine in "Brave Hearts," Jenny Talbot in "Foggerty's Fairy," Mary Clifford in "Cupid in Camp," and Angelica Porter in "Fourteen Days." Accepting an engagement with the Messrs. Gatti, Miss Rorke made a hit as Lucy in "The Streets of London," and she successfully acted Ruth Herrick during a long tour with "In the Ranks." Returning to the Adelphi last autumn, she played the heroines in "Arrah-na-Pogue" and "The Colleen Bawn," and appeared subsequently as Lina Nelson in "The Harbour Lights." Our readers will be pleased to see Mr. Barraud's pretty photograph of one of our most gifted emotional actresses.

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Some few months ago, when "On 'Change" was produced at a



"Look at me."

THE HARBOUR LIGHTS.

Mary Burke







"Ye canna crush a Scotchman."

ON 'CHANGE.

*Felix Morris -*

morning performance, it was found that the play itself had little to recommend it, but the clever embodiment of a Scotchman by an actor quite unknown and unheralded saved the play, with the result that it is still enjoying a successful run. The unknown actor was Mr. Felix J. Morris, whose photograph in character is printed herewith. He is a native of Birkenhead, Cheshire, and was born on April 25, 1850. He commenced life as a medical student at Guy's Hospital, but, preferring the stage to anatomy, he left England for America in 1869. The hardships endured by the young aspirant for histrionic fame were at first terribly severe. After a hard struggle, he at length obtained a foothold in the Albany Theatre in a position, at first, little better than that of a supernumerary. After three years of incessant and varied work, feeling that he had conquered an almost fatal nervousness, and had acquired sufficient experience, he made a bolder bid for favour in Canada, where he was long appreciated, and where he received the first realencouragement in his career. From the time ofhis landing in America until 1885, Mr. Morris spent all his time in his adopted country, with the exception of a part of a season when he visited the West Indies. Through the offices of a Canadian admirer, Mr. Morris obtained a London engagement, and had the gratification of playing at last before an audience of his own countrymen. His acting as the Scotch professor in "*On 'Change*" has become the talk of the town, and should secure him a permanent place on the metropolitan stage.

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When March, with treacherous winds and sunny skies, has fairly made its advent known amongst us, the attention of many whose lives are more or less severed from their usual routine of action by the so-called pleasures of a London season will gladly be directed towards such an eminently refined and intellectual form of entertainment as that now being given by Mr. Clifford Harrison at Steinway Hall on the Saturday afternoons of each successive week. Those previously acquainted with this gentleman's gifted powers of recitation were happily destined to be yet more favourably impressed by the excellent manner with which, upon the opening day of the present series, he narrated varied scenes and incidents of human life, whilst others but just acquainted with Mr. Harrison's talents must no less willingly have admitted that in him we find a striking example of unquestionable abilities being turned to a good and most praiseworthy account.

Glancing for a moment at that exquisitely pathetic tale of Heaven's joy and earth's misery, "*The Legend of Provence*," breathing a purity and depth of feeling such as never seems missing from the lyrics of Adelaide Anne Proctor, we recognise how admirably Mr. Harrison, by wedding the voice of music to the poet's innermost thoughts, succeeds in alternately placing before our eyes the peaceful life and holy dreams of Sister Angela, the Convent Child, the sad tumult of sorrowing despair subsequently wrought in her soul by undue attachment to the

pleasures of this life, and lastly, the weary woman's agonised cry of repentance, when, crouching at the door of her girlhood's home—fearing to meet the recognising gaze of those whose tender voices arouse fleeting memories of many a bygone year—Angela finds herself in the holy presence of the Virgin Mother, who bears to the fainting heart not only the joyful message of Christ's divine forgiveness, but also the sweet assurance that the young novice's flight is known to none, her daily cares and duties having been performed by no other hands than those of the Blessed Mother herself. Words can but inadequately describe how greatly the beauty of such thoughts as the above are strengthened and intensified by the solemn chant and plaintive snatches of melody which Mr. Harrison appropriately introduces at varied intervals of the poem. Still more forcibly, perhaps, in Baring Gould's "*Building of St. Sophia*" do we note how effectively the soft tones of music put the finishing touch of realism to the most richly-coloured dreams of poets' fancy, so happy in thought and treatment being the diversified strains with which the reciter heralds the approach of the varied nations assembled to view the majestic splendour of the temple erected by Justinian to heathen deities rather than to the one true God. Not solely, however, are Mr. Harrison's powers centred upon the enviable task of creating, or at least strengthening, in our minds the existence of those thoughts "that do often lie too deep for tears," as instanced by his admirable delivery of the scene from the "*Pickwick Papers*" relating to the Etanswill Election, which, with one or two other sketches of a like laughable character, brought to a truly merry ending an entertainment happily destined to prove but the commencement of a much longer series of recitations than any Mr. Harrison has as yet given us. When we add that this gentleman proposes on certain afternoons to appropriate the first part of his programme to an individual recital of many special works from the pen of Robert Browning, Lord Byron, Sir Walter Scott, and Chas. Kingsley, as also to some well-known scenes in Shakespeare's plays, we have surely exemplified by fact that Mr. Harrison's powers of memory and imagination are of no limited or commonplace an order.

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Mr. Frank Lindo's second recital at Steinway Hall, January 26th, reflects much credit on one so young. Mr. Lindo recited the play of "*Hamlet*" without book, and was letter perfect; not a hitch, not a moment's hesitation. His elocution was excellent, and he showed much power and dramatic intensity. His reading was that of Mr. Wilson Barrett in every detail and intonation. Mr. Lindo has a fine voice somewhat of the same quality as Mr. Barrett's, and he had evidently not been able to resist imitating him; at times one could have sworn that it was the talented actor himself who was speaking. This was clever, but to be regretted, however good the model. Mimicry is not a high form of art,

and Mr. Frank Lindo, who is naturally gifted, will find that he will acquire more by a careful study of the author than by that of any special exponent.

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The Busy Bees gave a matinée at the Gaiety Theatre on January 30, in aid of the National Orthopædic Hospital. The performance was excellent, and they reaped an artistic and pecuniary success. It was announced that the charity would benefit £220 or £230, as kind friends had defrayed all expenses, and the cheque paid to Mr. Hollingshead for the use of the theatre had been handed over by him to the charity as his subscription. "For Her Child's Sake" was again given by the Busy Bees, and I again endorse the praise I gave them last July. Mrs. Lennox Browne and Mr. Arthur Ayers were both excellent as Edith and Stephen Ormonde, showing a depth of feeling in no way overdone. Mr. Claude Penley and Mr. Erskine Lock were as good as ever. Mr. William Harding, the only one new in the cast, was also good; but these three last-named were hardly audible at first. "Pygmalion and Galatea" was surprisingly well acted for amateurs. Praise is deserved by all but two—Chrysos's Slave, by Mr. J. Rudge Harding, and the Pygmalion of Mr. W. L. Hallward; his acting is stiff and unnatural, and his elocution most defective. Mr. A. Boyer Harding did well as Pygmalion's Slave. Mr. A. H. Morrison was one of the very best Leucippe I have ever seen; and the Chrysos of Mr. W. Cope was very funny. It is seldom that the small part of Myrine falls into such good hands as those of Miss Gertrude Warden; she gave life to a rôle which is too often gone through anyhow. Miss Margaret Brandon was a very good Cynisca; Miss Brandon, who is a good actress, ought to strive against two faults—a lack of tenderness when it is needed, and a want of variety in the expression of her face; earnestness she has, and the speech "O! pitiful adventurer!" was admirably delivered, showing much dramatic power. Princess Helen of Kappurthala was unfortunately not well made up as Galatea; her acting was very sweet and maidenly; all the strange things Galatea says came from her lips as they should, spoken with childlike innocence. Where power was needed she was a little overweighted, but still very charming. Mrs. Lennox Brown was a handsome Daphne, and acted her part very well. The audience was numerous and appreciative.

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The performance given by the Owl D. S. at St. George's Hall February 4th was decidedly more successful than the previous one of the same society. "David Garrick" was the piece represented, with Mr. Arthur Hanson in the title rôle. Rather stiff in the first act, he warmed to his work and did very well in the second, but in the third he either forgot his part or was strangely absent-minded, for he neither attempted to act his part or to give meaning to his words. Mr. J. E. Mortimer had a fair idea of how old Ingot ought to be played, but he was very uncertain of his words, and too frequently gave way to an inclination to laugh. Mr.

Frank Hole acted Squire Chivy with his usual "go," and Mr. G. A. Toplis, Mr. F. Darnley, and Mr. W. M. Colling filled the remaining parts adequately. I cannot say much for Miss Emmie Marshall's impersonation of Ada. Mrs. Davidson Nichol and Miss Florence Smart did very well in their small parts. By some mistake the curtain came down in the middle of the second act, to the performers' dismay; it was promptly raised again, however, but, as a compensation, I suppose, at the end of the piece, after the last word was spoken, the signal had to be given twice before it was lowered. "*More than Ever*," Arthur Mathisson's clever concentrated Tragedy in one Horror, was well acted all round, especially by Mr. Arthur W. Hughes and Mr. Frank Hole. Miss Lydia Miller, who was making her first appearance, is very pretty, and did all that was required of her in so small a part. Mr. R. Vincent Hughes, Mr. W. M. Colling, and Mr. G. Davenport were also in the cast. The dances were very well executed indeed, and the play went off briskly.

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"*The Guv'nor*" and "*Ruth's Romance*," given by the Tottenham House D.C., February 6, certainly ranks as one of the very best performances given at St. George's Hall for the last few months; indeed, the impersonation of Theo. Macclesfield by Mr. S. Conacher alone served to remind one that these were amateurs. The cast included:—Messrs. B. G. Lovell, J. A. Laffy, A. J. Mullins, C. Davis, R. Mosley, D. E. Owen, W. E. Hurst, C. H. Carmichael, and W. Dee, who all acted very well. Mr. J. A. Stewart and Mr. H. Hammond proved themselves real artistes as Old Macclesfield and Freddy. The former gave a remarkably clever piece of character acting, funny in the extreme, but not the least vulgar. The latter was gentlemanly and earnest, and thoroughly won the sympathy of the audience by his capital acting. The amateurs further showed their judgment in the selection of the fair professionals whose services they enlisted. Miss Effie Liston and Miss Kittie Claremont were charming as the Butterscotch ladies. Miss Kate Hodson was a first-rate Mrs. Macclesfield, while as her daughter Miss Annie White was sympathetic and pleasing; and Miss Edith Hamilton was a very good maid. "*Ruth's Romance*" showed Mr. H. Finnis and Mr. A. J. Mullins to great advantage, and the Ruth of Miss Kittie Claremont was most bewitching. However full of spirits, this young lady's acting is always refined, simple, and earnest; her Ruth was both witty and sympathetic. That Miss Kittie Claremont gives careful study to her part is evident, but working in the right way she preserves all the freshness and fragrance of perfect nature. The Tottenham House Band was excellent as usual.

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A commemorative celebration of the anniversary of Charles Dickens's birthday was held at the Freemasons' Hall on February 8, the actual date, the 7th, falling on a Sunday. The celebration took the form of an entertainment and a costume ball. The reading and recitation were, to be expected, from the works of the great novelist, the music also being appropriate to the occasion; and Mr. Edwin Drew, the originator

of this, also read some of his own verses in praise of Charles Dickens, and contributed "The Death of Little Nell" for his share of the reading. Mr. Drew had, I believe, several disappointments, and there was nothing very striking in the entertainment, though a word of praise must be given to the Misses Virginia and Emily Blackwood and Mr. Charles Cameron; the latter is a rough diamond at present, but worth the polishing. Unfortunately for the success of the ball, it began too early, many of the dancers only appearing after the theatres were over. The costumes were in the minority, and not always easily defined. Mrs. Weldon as Sergeant Buzfuz, accompanied by Mrs. Bardell, was the most striking. The affair cannot be called a complete success, but the idea is good and worth repeating. It had evidently created real interest in the literary and dramatic world, who were well represented. The programmes were novel and artistic in design, and a performance of the Royal Punch and Judy was given during the ball.

The following prologue, written by Mr. W. L. Courtney, was delivered on February 13, 1886, on the occasion of the opening of the new theatre at Oxford, with a representation of "Twelfth Night" by the Oxford University Dramatic Society :—

CHARACTERS :

Ancient Spirit of the Drama	}	Mr. BOURCHIER.
Modern Undergraduate		

*Enter Spirit of the Drama, dishevelled and bent.*

Lone and dishonoured, lurking in the shade,  
Creeping in twilight darkness, half afraid  
To meet the eyes of honest men, I stand  
With lowered face and deprecating hand,  
Irresolute whether to remain or flee—  
Spirit of Drama, as it used to be.  
'Animula vagula'—how runs their patter?  
For in a learned city one must chatter  
In learned language, or be reckoned silly—  
I mean, I'm badly clad and somewhat chilly.  
Years upon years of academic rule,  
Proctorial mandates, and the cruel School  
Of Statutes, framed by Laud, have left me this,  
A thing for all to mock at and to hiss,  
With tangled locks and battered wreath and less  
Than nothing on to hide my nakedness.  
'Mid fumes of nicotine to make you sick,  
I've earned a wretched pittance at 'the Vic':  
I've tried to make you laugh with poor burlesque;  
I've tried to tempt the scholar from his desk  
With nothing better the whole sad night long  
Than doubtful dance and more than doubtful song.  
What else was left for me to do or try?  
I knew the statute 'gainst "funambuli";  
And oft the words have muttered 'mid my cronies,

"Incarcerentur omnes histriones." \*  
 What's *this*? Where am I? Is it all a fancy?  
 A product of some Eastern necromancy?  
 Is this the Indian Institute of Monier?  
 Or the New School? or something even funnier—  
 Perhaps prophetic of the distant future—  
 A model almshouse for the married tutor?  
 A brand new Theatre? Why then 'tis clear  
 My day is over; I've no business here.  
 At last! Instead of Darkness shines the Day:  
 Arise, thou modern Spirit of the Play.

*Enter Undergraduate.*

I thought I heard some ancient voice invoke  
 The Modern Spirit. Can it be a joke?  
 No, everywhere around me signs arise  
 Of some new order dawning on men's eyes.

Disfranchised by some most unworthy dodge,  
 Subordinated to a rustic Hodge,  
 We yet can look unenvious on the shield  
 Whereon there stands too obviously revealed,—  
 Emblem of our new firm of Cabinet-makers—  
 Our city cow, agraze on three blue acres. †  
 For we without a bribe, without a vote,  
 Have found a *stall* for our dramatic *goat*;  
 Yet e'en this goat to Politics we owe it—  
 Aristotelian 'Politics' of Jowett.  
 But cow and goat no politics shall sever,  
 Both shall graze on 'mid cries of "Hall for ever!"

What, have we then no platform? Yes, the stage.  
 No ticket? No, they've all been sold an age.  
 A programme? Yes! "The rule of Law and Order"  
 Disguised in an admixture of soft sawder,  
 New members with our novel house begin,  
 Lawson is out, but *Drinkwater* is in;  
 While the cross-benches, free from Irish taint,  
*Lucas* will look as fresh as any paint.  
 You have your seats, but all unseated we  
 Stand for a critical constituency.  
 If we're returned, there's none that disagrees  
 To take the oath—to do his best to please.

Now for our play—Shakespeare's, you may be sure,  
 We aim no lower, nor a worse endure;  
 Constant we hope our names will fill the bill,  
 "Twelfth Night," to-night; hereafter "What *you* Will."

[Exit]

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Our Melbourne correspondent writes:—

Our only sensation during the month of November was the production, at the Theatre Royal, on Saturday, 7th, of an American drama, "The Shadows of a Great City." It was by no means a good specimen of its class, and, although splendidly mounted, failed to achieve any success. Mr. J. C. Williamson, Miss Maggie Moore, Miss Kate

\* Statt : xv. §§ 7. 3.

† Oxford City Arms are: Argent an Ox Gules, armed and unguled Or, passing over a ford of water in base, proper.

Bishop (her first appearance at this theatre), and Mr. H. Vincent, sustained the principal *roles*. On Saturday, November 27, Mr. Geo. Rignold revived "Faust" at the Opera House, appearing himself as Mephistopheles, Miss Lucia Harwood being the Marguerite, Mr. Brian Darley, Faust, and Mr. T. B. Appleby, Siebel. Contrary to all expectation, the drama made a hit and ran until Christmas Eve, when "Henry V." was put forward in opposition to the pantomime, and is now drawing good houses. It must be withdrawn in three weeks to make way for "Madame L'Archiduc" and a new opera company, which comprises Mdlle. Lottie Monital (Mdme. Poussard), once known to Alhambra frequenters, Miss Annette Ivanova, Mr. Phil Day, Mr. Albert Brennir, and others. On Monday, Dec. 7th, "Saints and Sinners" replaced "The Shadows of a Great City" at the Theatre Royal, and was played with partial success until Dec. 22nd. Miss Essie Jenyns, Miss Maggie Moore, Mr. J. C. Williamson, Mr. W. Holloway, and Mr. Frank Cates were the principal artistes concerned. On Christmas Eve the usual sacred concert was held in the theatre, and on Boxing-night we beheld the wonders of the only pantomime in the city. The story selected was that of "The Sleeping Beauty," and the author, Mr. Ganett Walch, has performed his duty in a most perfunctory manner. From a literary point of view, it is the worst pantomime we have yet had; but from a spectacular point it is the best. Miss Emma Chambers, Miss Amy Horton, Mr. H. R. Harwood, the Raynor Brothers, Mr. A. Redwood, and a host of local actors fill up the cast. After the pantomime, "Iolanthe" is to be revived for a short season, and then we are to have "The Mikado." Mr. Pinero's three-act farce, "The Magistrate," did eight weeks' excellent business at the Bijou Theatre, and was replaced on Saturday, Jan. 2nd, by Mr. Grundy's comedy, "The Glass of Fashion," which does not appear to suit our public. Miss Nina Boucicault, Miss Florence Trevelyan, Mr. "Dot" Boucicault, Mr. G. S. Titherage, and Mr. Robert Brough are included in the bill. The Leon and Cushman Minstrels—a very clever company—are drawing crowded houses to the Nugget Theatre by the excellence of their performances. A variety company are at the Victoria Hall, and Mr. Harry Rickards is singing at St. George's Hall; he has been doing very bad business.

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Sydney has several pantomimes this year—"Cinderella" at the Royal, "King Cockatoo" at the Alhambra, "Mother Goose" at the Olympic," and "Black-Hide Susan" at the Academy of Music. Mr. G. W. Anson's season at the Sydney Opera was a most disastrous failure, and was abbreviated; Mr. John L. Hall took his place, and is now playing "Baffled." Mr. Alfred Dampier is playing "The Cricket on the Hearth" at the Gaiety Theatre. Adelaide has to depend on a stock company and minstrel show for holiday fare. New Zealand has a number of companies now on tour Mr. Geo. Darrell is playing his

own pieces in Auckland; the Majeroni Opera Company are at Christchurch; John Radcliffe and Pauline Rita are in Wellington; the Emerson Minstrels and "Dick Whittington" tempt the canny folks of Dunedin; and numbers of minor combinations are on the roads. Mr. Anson contemplates a tour in that country. It may not be out of place to mention that the Sydney public thoroughly appreciated Mr. Anson's ability as an actor, and I should have to record a success were it not for the utter incompetence of the people he brought out with him, and the antiquated plays, "Grimaldi" and "Noah's Ark," he elected to open with. As a general rule, it is perfectly useless for any actor to attempt the colonies unless he comes to a responsible management and has fixed dates. Our theatres are always engaged months ahead—that is, those very few which can be rented by anyone desirous of doing so. All the theatres in the largest and best paying cities are in the hands of three firms, who have several companies of their own to occupy them constantly. The colonies are a true El dorado to the capable actor who comes out here under engagement, as Miss Ward and Mr. Dion Boucicault can testify, but without that it simply means bankruptcy. I sound these few notes of warning in the hope of preventing some aspiring Thespian, inflamed by the accounts of the money to be made out of the gentle colonist, from finding himself one day with nothing in his pockets—no money to pay his passage back, his only resource the boilers on the river wharf, facetiously known as "The Swell's Hotel," where many a man, whose name and deeds are better known on your side of the water, has been glad to find a night's rest.

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Miss Calhoun, who is at present on a visit to her home in California, will return to England in a few weeks, and will produce, in July next, a new and original play, which has been specially written for her by Herman C. Merivale.

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Mr. H. Savile Clarke's bright comedietta, "A Lyrical Lover," originally produced at the Imperial Theatre in March, 1881, has been successfully revived at the Strand Theatre, where the heroine finds a clever representative in Miss Annie Baldwin.

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The seventh annual issue of "Dramatic Notes," by Austin Brereton, will be issued by the publishers of this magazine, Messrs. Carson and Comerford, at the end of March. It will contain, as heretofore, portraits in character of the principal actors and actresses who have figured in the chief productions of the London stage during 1885.

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I am desirous of contradicting a statement which has recently appeared in several papers to the effect that I intend abandoning

literature for the elocutionary platform. There is absolutely no foundation whatever for this report beyond the fact that, because I read one of my own compositions a week or two ago for the benefit of a charity, it is assumed by certain clever writers that I intend to devote the remainder of my days to competition with such professional reciters as Mr. Wilson Barrett and Mr. William Terriss. I have no such intention, although I shall doubtless read and lecture in public on future occasions, should my other duties permit me to do so.

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New plays produced, and important revivals, in London, the provinces, and Paris, from January 25 to February 22, 1886:—

(Revivals are marked thus \*).

#### LONDON:

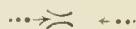
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| January 28. | "Enemies," a comedy-drama, in five acts, adapted by Charles F. Coghlan from Georges Ohnet's romance, "La Grande Marnière." Prince's Theatre.   |
| ,, 30.      | "The Sins of the Fathers," a drama, in one act, by W. Lestocq.   |
| February 4. | "A Woman of the World," a comedy, in three acts, adapted from the German by B. C. Stephenson. Haymarket Theatre. (Matinée—single performance.) |
| ,, "        | "Mistaken Identity," a new farce, in one act, by Alfred Murray. Gaiety Theatre. (Matinée—single performance.)                                  |
| ,, "        | "Faust and Loose; or, Brocken Vows," a travestie, in one act, by F. C. Burnand. Toole's Theatre.   |
| ,, 10.      | "Sappho," a lyrical romance, in one act, lyrics by Harry Lobb, music by Walter Slaughter. Opéra Comique. (Matinée—single performance.)         |
| ,, 13.      | "The Carp," a new and original musical whimsicality, in one act, written by Frank Desprez, music by Alfred Cellier. Savoy Theatre.             |
| ,, "        | "Antoinette Rigaud," a new comedy, in three acts, by Raymond Deslandes, translated by Ernest Warren. St. James's Theatre.                      |
| ,, 15.      | "Keep Your Places," operetta, in one act, by Robert Reece, music by G. B. Allen. St. George's Hall. (Matinée—single performance.)              |
| ,, "        | "Wife or Widow," a drama, in four acts, by Clifton W. Tayleure. Grand Theatre.   |
| ,, 17.      | * "Engaged," an original farcical comedy, in three acts, by W. S. Gilbert. Haymarket Theatre.  |
| ,, 18.      | "The Lord Harry," a new and original romantic play, in five acts, by Henry Arthur Jones and Wilson Barrett. Princess's Theatre.                |

#### PROVINCES:

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| January 25. | "Mizpah," a comedy-drama, in four acts, by J. B. Mulholland. Theatre Royal, Great Grimsby.                              |
| February 8. | "The Landlord," an original domestic drama, in four acts, by W. J. Colling Hall. Theatre Royal, Sunderland.             |
| ,, 15.      | "Through Fire and Snow," a new comedy-drama, in a prologue and three acts, by Max Goldberg. Theatre Royal, Scarborough. |

## PARIS.

- January 24.\* "La Casquette du Père Bugeaud," a military melodrama, in three acts, by MM. Gaston, Marot, and Clairian. Château d'Eau.  
 ,, "Le Nouveau Seigneur du Village," a comic opera, in one act, by Boieldieu. Opéra Comique.  
 ,, 27. "Trop de Vertu," a comedy, in three acts, by Hennequin *père et fils*. Palais Royal.  
 ,, "La Cuisine du Diable," a pantomime. Cirque d'Hiver.  
 ,, 29.\* "Doit-on le dire?" a comedy, in three acts, by Eugène Labiche and Alfred Duru. Cluny.  
 ,, 30.\* "Trois Femmes pour un Mari," a comedy, in three acts, by Grenet-Dancourt. Déjazet.  
 ,, "Les Demoiselles Clochart," a comedy-vaudeville, in three acts, by Henry Meilhac. Variétés.  
 ,, 31\* "Le Sonneur de Saint Paul," a drama, in five acts, by Bouchardy. Ambigu.
- February 1.\* "Le Voyage de Monsieur Perrichon," a comedy, in four acts, by Labiche. Vaudeville.  
 ,, 2.\* "Le Fils de Famille," a comedy, in three acts, by MM. Bayard and Biéville. Odéon.  
 ,, 4. "Le Mari d'un Jour," a comic opera, in three acts, by Adolphe d'Ennery and Armand Silvestre; music by Arthur Coquard. Opéra Comique.  
 ,, \* "La Boule," a comedy, in three acts, by MM. Meilhac and Halévy. Palais-Royal.  
 ,, 5.\* "Les Ouvriers," a drama, in one act, by Manuel. Comédie Française.  
 ,, 8.\* "Andromaque," a tragedy, in five acts, by Racine. Odéon.  
 ,, 9.\* "L'Assommoir," a drama, in nine tableaux, by William Busnach and Gastineau. Châtelet.  
 ,, 12. Inauguration of the Nouveau Cirque in the Rue St. Honoré.  
 ,, 13. "Les Noces Improvisées," a comic opera in three acts, words by Armand Livrat and Albert Fonteney; music by Chassaigne. Bouffes-Parisiens.  
 ,, \* "Nana," a drama, in five acts, by William Busnach. Beaumarchais.  
 ,, 17\* "Nuits du Boulevard," a drama, in five acts, by Pierre Zaccome and Théodore Henry. Nations.  
 ,, 18. "Djemmah," a ballet, in two acts, by Léonce Detryat and Pluque, music by Francis Thomé.  
 ,, "Folie Parisienne, a ballet pantomime, in two acts and four tableaux; music by Francis Thomé. Eden  
 ,, 19. "Serment d'Amour," a comic opera, in three acts, by Maurice Ordonneau; music by Édmond Audran. Nouveautés.



## Punch and Judy.

**D**O you remember, or do I  
Endow a dreamer's fancy  
With such-like life as may be by  
A poet's necromancy,  
How one still night with stealthy feet  
We paced the quiet city,  
That seemed to compass in each street,  
Some tale of grief or pity ?

But as thus aimlessly we went,  
A burst—a sudden sally  
Of laughter and of merriment  
Came up a narrow alley.  
The silent city rang again  
With cries, shrill and sonorous,  
Till you and I were wellnigh fain  
To join the merry chorus.

Methinks 'twas you that first began—  
Tho' I stole quickly after—  
To risk a laugh that swiftly ran  
Into maturer laughter.  
“There still be cakes and ale,” you said,  
“E'en for the poor and wretched,  
And hearts long since to mis'ry wed  
Are yet by mirth infected.”

Then, by a common impulse led,  
We two, at quickened measure,  
Adown the narrow passage sped—  
Strange temple, sure, of pleasure !  
And still rang out the jocund sound,  
With pleasant iteration,  
Of children's voices, that had crowned  
Their mirth with exultation.

And lo ! before a public house,  
Lit up with flaming burners,  
That leaped and shrieked in shrill carouse,  
Like some weird scene of Turner's ;

A crowd, young, middle-aged, and old,  
 Staid, careless, joyful, moody,  
 Stood round a puppet show, where held  
 High revels, Punch and Judy!

A motley crowd—the weak and hale,  
 Forgetting even hunger,  
 To listen to the oft-heard tale  
 Told by a ballad-monger.  
 And how they laughed when Punch, the wretch,  
 Whacked Judy with his bludgeon ;  
 And showed small mercy to Jack Ketch,  
 That impudent curmudgeon.

Then faces, that long years ago  
 Had aged grown and wrinkled,  
 Broke into sunny smiles, and lo !  
 Eyes, worn with weeping, twinkled.  
 And, as the dolls, with gestures wild,  
 Went back and forwards prancing,  
 The crowd, infected, joked and smiled,  
 While some fell to adancing.

But we who stood so far apart,  
 Without the merry chorus,  
 Had we then lost the laughing art,  
 Which swayed the crowd before us ?  
 With heavy hearts we turned and went  
 Back tward the gaping entry,  
 Where, crouched in silence, bowed and bent,  
 Lay Night, like some grim Sentry.

And so life's puppets come and go :  
 Declaiming each his story,  
 Then passing forth from out the show—  
 Strange scene of fleeting glory !  
 A platform this for ev'ry age  
 To whet its steel on foeman,  
 With God as judge—the World for Stage—  
 And Death the grinning Showman.

T. MALCOLM WATSON.



# THE THEATRE.

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## The Discontents of a Dramatist.

BY H. SCHÜTZ WILSON.

"And high disdain from sense of injured merit."—MILTON.

IT has been said—and said by a great dramatist—that, as the Creator is shrouded in His own creation, so Shakespeare, the man, is hidden from us by the veil of his own works. Schiller says further (*Ueber naive und sentimentalische Dichtung*) that, in his youth, he sought in vain to find the poet Shakespeare behind his work; he strove, without success, to pierce to the heart of the dramatist; he essayed, without result, to attain to a conviction of the personality of the poet who remained hidden in his dramas; that he found it insupportable to feel that the man could never be found revealing himself; and that it took him many years of worship of the writer before he could learn to recognise, or to love, the individual so deeply shrined within his poet's work. It is not probable that Schiller ever attained to clear insight into the man, Shakespeare; and many others have found, and find, something of the same difficulty. This difficulty arises from several causes: it is partly owing to the dramatic form in which Shakespeare chiefly worked—a form which tends to raise a seeming barrier between author and reader; it is in a measure due to the absence of memoirs, of biography or autobiography; and it is a result of our comparative ignorance of the personality, or the ways of life of the mystic writer of a few poems, of many dramas, and of some sonnets.

Indeed, when we think of Shakespeare, the first natural impulse is to see his work only. The crowd of characters which he has created fill our imaginations, and we find it difficult to see through that crowd, and to get sight of the man behind it who had called out of vacancy, out of the thin air of fantasy, so many

real and yet ideal beings. Great as Shakespeare is as dramatist—and he is the greatest dramatist—he is yet greater as poet; and this fact explains his greatness as a dramatist. Of all the forms of imaginative creation, the drama is the one which most obscures the maker, and Shakespeare's dramatic transfusion of himself into his characters—whether it be Hamlet or Falstaff—is so complete, that we stop short at the creature, and see it rather than the creator who remains behind. But, after long knowledge of and delight in the supreme genius of Shakespeare, we begin to desire to pierce through the work to the worker, and through the poet to recognise the man. In a spiritual sense we can attain to some insight into the nature, the character, the mind of Shakespeare. We can see what things he loved and admired, what things he scorned and detested; and we can see, even if it be, as it were, through a glass, darkly, his hopes, beliefs, convictions, fancies about the unseen world, and man's relations to the great intangible mystery which surrounds man's mystic life in time, and in this unintelligible world. Things which we can, as it seems to me, discern with peculiar clearness are—his discontents as a dramatist; his indignation, half bitter, half sad, at the injustice or misjudgment shown to him by his contemporaries. Milton, who had so much less cause for literary complaint, could yet conceive the feeling which Shakespeare more strongly felt; and could realise, were it only in imagination, the

“High disdain from sense of injured merit.”

The greatest minds must have suffered in a supreme degree from.

“The spurns  
That patient merit of the unworthy takes;”

from envy, hatred and malice; from jealousy, ingratitude, misunderstanding; nay, even from perfidy and undeserved detraction. He would find

“More active Hate than Love;”

He would realise the world's malignity, and his spirit, so finely strung, would be very sensitive—even super-sensitive—to injustice, and would bear a sore sense of the causeless enmity and antagonism of men. I think that such feeling finds, at least, partial expression in his work, though “speech is but broken light upon the depth of the unspoken.” He might despise opinion—or, rather,

estimate accurately its exact value—and yet be tenderly sensitive to cruelty and wrong. He would yearn for equity, sympathy and human kindness; and yet would have to recognise, in sadness, soreness, weariness, dejection, that

“It seems like stories from the land of spirits  
If any man obtain that which he merits,  
Or any merit that which he attains.”

The gentle-hearted Shakespeare may have suffered deeply from calumny, slander, wanton injury and unmerited obloquy. He was too great to find full sympathy or cordial furtherance in any contemporary time.

It may be urged that Shakespeare should have had enough strength of character to have resisted, opposed, overcome enmity. I do not think that it was so. He would not be defiant or pugnacious. He would rather

“Suffer and be still.”

Temperament has more to do than<sup>s</sup> has character with active resistance, or with callous indifference. Temperament, which is half physical, half mental, underlies all character, and yet overrides it. We may mould or alter character, but we can never escape from our inborn temperament. Shakespeare would seem to have been of a nervous-lymphatic temperament, and he would be, to a great extent, animated by the good-will, and depressed by the enmity of men. He would be, in some measure, dependent upon friendly surroundings for the joy with which he would exercise his art. Sympathy would be of importance to him; although when working at a white heat of passionate rapture, in a glow of feeling, of imagination all compact, he might not, during the inspired hour, feel the want of it. Such profound humour as he possessed is only granted to a nature which contains a strong strain of melancholy. His heart would be very vulnerable; and he would feel too finely, too keenly, to have very much of that rough hardihood of character which supports and uplifts a coarser man against the attacks of cruelty, the injuries of enmity, or the insults of malignity. He could not be insensible to ill-judgment or to ill-will.

Modest and gentle as Shakespeare assuredly was, he yet could not be without pride—without a just and manly pride. That delicate sentiment of fine genius, that superb honour of noble character, would restrain him from any efforts of calculation, or of

address, or policy, to advance his interests, to win favour, or to flatter fortune. He could not stoop to any art or artifices to push himself forward. His enemies might sadden, or even embitter him, but could scarcely provoke him to acts of anger or to manifestations of hostility. We can never now exactly know them, but how great must have been his sorrows and struggles in the early part of his upward career! And his youthful difficulties would be all the greater because he certainly would never

“Crook the pregnant hinges of the knee  
Where thrift might follow fawning.”

We may well hope that he was one of those blest ones

“Whose blood and judgment are so well commingled,  
That they are not a pipe for fortune’s finger  
To sound what stop she pleases.”

And yet the fact that he wrote these very lines may suggest a doubt whether he did not, in some degree, suffer from lack of the very quality which he esteemed so highly. The “sense of tears in mortal things” is stirred when we contemplate the indignities and trials which probably surrounded the first efforts of the Warwickshire youth to unfold himself, to acquire a sure footing in a then London play-house.

“Whatever is too original will be hated at the first. It must slowly mould a public for itself; and the resistance of the early, thoughtless judgments must be overcome by a counter resistance to itself in a better audience slowly mustering against the first.” So says De Quincey; and it is easy to imagine that, in his early dramatic tentatives, Shakespeare must have met with opposition and obstruction from managers, brother dramatists, and even from audiences. His upward path must have been, in his earlier years in London, one of extreme and painful difficulty. He must have had cause for disappointment, almost for despair; and nothing but the sublime persistency of self-confident genius could have enabled him to make head against such a sea of troubles.

In his objective day all criticisms were oral. There were no journals, and there was no written criticism, and there were no critics by profession. The criticism on the Elizabethan drama was the reverberation of an audience. He would, no doubt, in the absence of written criticism, miss some sympathy, and some furtherance; but he would escape the weak, indifferent editor, who would allow a rival or an enemy to wreak a spite. He would never

have suffered under the coarse personality editor, who, unable to criticise, would have wantonly attacked the dramatist, and would have substituted for comprehension gross and groundless personal abuse, based upon a false imputation of mean motives for writing. From such outrages Shakespeare was saved by the conditions of a nobler, simpler, manlier time.

Posterity has done so much to redress any wrongs inflicted upon our great poet by his contemporaries, that we are apt to overlook the sore difficulties with which he doubtless had to struggle. We do not now often stop to consider those efforts to injure and oppress him which must have made his early time so painful, so disappointing, and so bitter to him. Judging by the allusions in his writings, his must have been a dignified sorrow, nobly borne. He would seem to have followed the injunction of the Psalmist, to "Leave off from wrath and let go displeasure: fret not thyself, else shalt thou be moved to do evil." He lived down all enmity, and probably became stronger from suffering. All the machinations of his enemies have long ago sunk to sleep and faded into forgetfulness. It is only when we consider curiously the few traces that we can find of his feeling and his life that we attain to a hint and glimpse of the sorrows that once must have encompassed Shakespeare's nobly tender spirit. The lightning of unjust and unworthy enmity dies out within its cloud. It is now time to adduce certain passages which seem to elucidate the point which we are immediately considering. Considerations of space restrict me to a few suggestive illustrations. There are both the discontents of the dramatist and the sorrows of the man, and we can find allusions which throw light upon this dual sadness. In "Hamlet"—the play which, perhaps, contains the largest quantity of self-revelation—we find that the company of players to which Burbage and Shakespeare belonged, the tragedians of the city, had been compelled to travel "by the means of the late innovation," that is, in consequence of a company of children-actors (boys, of course) having drawn the town away from those established tragedians, "whose endeavour kept in the wonted pace." The sorrowful dramatist, indignant at the fickleness and ignorance of audiences, tells us, through Rosencrantz, that there is "an eyrie of children, little eyases, that cry out on the top of question, and are most tyrannically clapped for 't: these are now the fashion, and so berattle the common stages (so they call them), that many

wearing rapiers are afraid of goose quills, and dare scarce come thither."

The children-players and their unmerited success had irritated the manager as well as pained the dramatist; but the dramatist alone speaks, the dramatist who had learned to dread "slander, censure rash," in the following allusion to a play:—

"The play, I remember, pleased not the million; 'twas caviare to the general: but it was—as I received it, and others, whose judgements in such matters cried in the top of mine—an excellent play, well digested in the scenes, set down with as much modesty as cunning. I remember, one said there were no sallets in the lines to make the matter savoury, nor no matter in the phrase that might indict the author of affection; but called it an honest method, as wholesome as sweet, and by very much more handsome than fine."

The only question for us now would seem to be: To which of Shakespeare's plays was such criticism applied? That he had had the grief of hearing such remarks applied to a play of his, which he well knew to be good, is surely clear. He, too, may have suffered from "the groundlings, who, for the most part, are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb-show and noise." He had heard, with pain, the laugh of the unskilful; and he had more than once seen, with disgust, the clown try "to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh too, though in the meantime some necessary question of the play be then to be considered: that's villainous."

Many things would—at least, in his earlier career—conspire to rob Shakespeare of that calm, glad temper of mind in which such work as his ought to be performed. The adventitious in life could scarcely work in favour of a man like Shakespeare, and the wonder is that, through so many lets and hindrances, he could do the work that he did as he did it. To turn to another source of regret, which does not so directly affect the dramatist, let us recite the thoughts which have been given to the Prince of Arragon--

"Who shall go about  
To cozen fortune and be honourable  
Without the stamp of merit? Let none presume  
To wear an undeserved dignity.  
Oh! that estates, degrees, and offices  
Were not derived corruptly, and that clear honour

Were purchased by the merit of the wearer !  
 How many then should cover that stand bare !  
 How many be commanded that command !  
 How much low peasantry would then be glean'd  
 From the true seed of honour ! And how much honour  
 Pick'd from the chaff and ruin of the times  
 To be new varnished !”

Had Shakespeare never “stood bare” while meaner men stood covered before him ? Had he not felt that clear honour was not always purchased by the merit of the wearer ? Had he never been commanded when he should have commanded ? Was there no sad bitterness in his heart as he realised the truth that merit cannot reckon in this world upon the meed that it is worthy of ?

That *Weltschmerz*—that life sadness, born of the contrast between the facts and the ideals of life, which is felt by every noble and imaginative mind—must have been felt with singular force by Shakespeare. Let us try to get at his feelings through a few extracts from the sonnets. If the Prince of Arragon were known to have been a sonneteer, he might have written—

“ When, in disgrace with fortune and men’s eyes,  
 I all alone beweep my outcast state,  
 And trouble deaf Heaven with my bootless cries,  
 And look upon myself and curse my fate,  
 Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,  
 Featur’d like him—like him with friends possess’d,  
 Desiring this man’s art and that man’s scope,  
 With what I most enjoy contented least.”

“ When to the sessions of sweet silent thought,  
 I summon up remembrance of things past ;  
 I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,  
 And with old woes now wail my dear time’s waste.

“ Then can I grieve at grievances foregone,  
 And heavily from woe to woe, tell oe’r  
 The sad account of fore-bemoanèd moan,  
 Which I new pay as if not paid before.

“ Let those who are in favour with their stars,  
 Of public honour and proud titles boast ;  
 Whilst I, whom fortune of such triumph bars,  
 Unlook’d for joy in that I honour most.”

“ Tired with all these, for restful death I cry—  
 As, to behold desert a beggar born ;  
 And needy nothing trimmed in jollity,  
 And purest faith unhappily forsworn,

And gilded honour shamefully misplaced,  
 And maiden virtue rudely strumpeted,  
 And right perfection wrongfully disgraced,  
 And strength by limping sway disabled,  
 And art made tongue-tied by authority,  
 And folly, doctor-like, controlling skill,  
 And simple truth miscalled simplicity,  
 And captive Good attending captain Ill."

So far our extracts from the sonnets have shown the abstract sorrows of the man ; but the following passages express particularly the griefs of the poor player—of the dramatist :—

" Alas ! 'tis true, I have gone here and there,  
 And made myself a motley to the view,  
 Gored my own thoughts, sold cheap what is most dear—  
 Made old offences of affections new.

" Oh ! for my sake do you with fortune chide  
 The guilty goddess of my harmful deeds,  
 That did not better for my life provide,  
 Than public means which public manners breeds.  
 Thence comes it that my name receives a brand,  
 And almost thence my nature is subdued  
 To what it works in—like the dyer's hand."

Shakespeare was, I think, cavalier rather than Bohemian, and his gentle nature would be by no means specially suited by the life of the play-house. Chance seems to have impelled him into that walk of life which, while it afforded him full opportunity for the development of his rare genius, was yet repugnant to his personal tastes and feelings. As an actor he did not rise into the very first rank, and he may have loved "the cunning of the scene" rather than the acting of it. He can never have known, in his own person, the greatest joys and triumphs of the actor's art. With him, the maker of plays over-rode the player of them ; and it seems likely that his personal tastes and habits were retiring, quiet, modest. The contrast, in the day of Elizabeth, between noble or gentle and the player or playwright would indeed be sharp ; and Shakespeare's sympathies were probably rather with Southampton or Rutland than with Tarleton or even Burbage. He would seem to have disliked making himself a "motley to the view," or exposing himself to sneers against "Shake-scene." May it not well be that he would have preferred another life than that in the play-house ? True it is that his loss is our gain ; and that, however little he may—apart from art joy in writing—have loved the player's life, we yet, by means which were sorrowful to him, have got the most out of his genius

and his labours. We can only advance hypotheses about his career; we cannot know whether irresistible impulse or simple chance drove him first into the play-house. But if it were what we call "chance," then certainly the interests of the world were rarely served by chance.

"What trait of his private mind has he hidden in his dramas?" We have seen something of his personal and dramatist discontents, but his plays also show us some of the things that he loved. To take only one point. He clearly felt a loving tenderness for such characters as Bassanio, Orlando, Ferdinand—for those noble youths, honourable, gentle, brave, courteous, chivalrous, who were the precursors of Walter Scott's cadets. For them, as for his pure and tender women, he cannot conceal his sympathy and affection. His "shaping spirit of imagination" delights visibly in all honour and courage in man; in all divine love and devotion in noble, ideal women. Manners, too, are fine symbols of inward nobleness which he always finely and lovingly depicts.

"Leave this hypocritical prating about the masses. Masses are rude, lame, unmade, pernicious in their demands, and need not to be flattered, but to be schooled. I wish not to concede anything to them, but to tame, drill, divide, and break them up, and draw individuals out of them." So says the American, Emerson; and Shakespeare scorned and hated—

"The blunt monster with uncounted heads—the still-discordant, wavering multitude." He—the author of "*Julius Cæsar*," of "*Coriolanus*"—would never have favoured any loose or wanton extension of the franchise. He tendered too dearly national honour and greatness in the England which he loved so well. The throng of citizens want first to give to Brutus a statue with his ancestors, and then find, directly afterwards, that there's not a nobler man in Rome than Antony. The mutinous citizens would kill Caius Marcius, and have corn at their own price, and either they must

"Confess yourselves wondrous malicious,  
Or be accused of folly."

It is good sometimes to consider carefully some one special point in connection with our Shakespeare. We have touched, even if imperfectly, upon one phase of his working and his life. We have been trying to glance at the silent sorrows and struggles of a transcendent genius, whose workings were limited by the

conditions of life and work in even an Elizabethan play-house. How often must he have seen lower men and inferior plays preferred before him and his work? And yet he remains victor, conqueror, sovereign, if it were only in virtue of his power of vision and his tendency to excuse and pity all the wrongs inflicted upon supreme but patient merit.

Shakespeare is the sun of our English literature. It is the sun which tells us the true time, but yet indicates a different hour in differently placed places; and Shakespeare, now recognised as the “crown o’ the world,” finds in Germany the reverent insight of Goethe, finds in France the freakish rhodomontade of Voltaire. Small wonder that our Shakespeare should have to wait long for recognition, that he should have seen lowlier merit acknowledged before his turn came. The hour hand moves more slowly than the minute hand. The great man has most to expect from the slow justice of dragging time. We may say that the depravity of public taste, the opposition of malignity, affected Shakespeare rather with a feeling of sad indignation than a sense of permanent injury. But for the trouble with Sir Thomas Lucy, it may be that “the woods and skies, the rustic life of man in Stratford there, had been enough for this man.” “I fancy there is in him the politician, the thinker, legislator, philosopher; in one or the other degree he could have been, he is all these.”

We cannot waste half-an-hour in thus thinking of, speaking together about our peerless Shakespeare, since he is “the grandest thing we have yet done.” To him was given that diviner inspiration in which we may recognise “the pomp and prodigality of Heaven.”



## Bressant.

By CHARLES HERVEY.

NO one, it is presumable, will be inclined to dispute the fact that those endowed with rare personal advantages have a better chance of making their way in the world than usually falls to the lot of others less favourably handicapped by nature. On the stage especially a prepossessing exterior, if not absolutely a passport to success, may at least be regarded as no unimportant auxiliary towards attaining it ; and, provided that its possessor's "ramage," to quote La Fontaine, be on a par with his "plumage," he may fairly anticipate that his future will be comparatively plain sailing. With both these requisites, physical and artistic, the excellent comedian forming the subject of the present paper was eminently gifted ; he had, moreover—a rarity among his theatrical compatriots—the air and manners of a perfect gentleman, and in this respect reminded one of his celebrated contemporary, Lafont. Indeed, were I asked whether that renowned lady-killer or Bressant best deserved the title of "*l'homme du monde égaré au théâtre*," I should be disposed to reply like the tailor when summoned to decide between the claims to fashionable supremacy of the Prince Regent and Beau Brummell, and give the latter "a trifle the preference."

If credit may be attached to a report current in dramatic circles, the father of Jean Baptiste François Bressant was a member of an ancient patrician family ; of his mother, who apparently belonged to a lower class of society, little or nothing is known. It is, however, certain that from his earliest youth he was entirely dependent on her for his maintenance ; for we find him, when barely fifteen years old, occupying the humble position of "saute-ruisseau," or half-clerk, half-errand boy in an attorney's office, which, after a few months' trial, he exchanged for that of assistant in the shop of a picture dealer. There he had more leisure for the study of his favourite authors, Corneille and Racine,

and nothing pleased him better than to find some one indulgent enough to listen to his declamatory efforts, and encourage him to cultivate a talent already rich in promise, and rendered still more attractive by the charm of a melodious and exquisitely sympathetic voice.

Chance made him acquainted with Casimir Bonjour, author of “*Le Mari à Bonnes Fortunes*,” and other estimable comedies now almost forgotten, but popular in their day. Struck with the young man’s impassioned delivery and graceful bearing, he dispatched him with a letter to Michelot, of the *Comédie Française*, one of the best dramatic professors of his time, strongly recommending his *protégé* as a pupil who only required the necessary instruction to do credit to any master. Michelot smiled as he read this epistle, and glanced attentively at the bearer.

“How old are you?” he inquired.

“Nearly seventeen.”

“Ah! too young for admission to the Conservatoire. Never mind,” he added kindly, noticing the applicant’s look of disappointment, “we must do what we can without it. Come again to-morrow, and, if I think I can make anything of you, there is a vacancy in my private class, and you shall fill it.”

Two months later, while diligently prosecuting his studies, Bressant was offered an engagement by the brothers Seveste, who at that period enjoyed the monopoly of managing the three or four theatres situated in the “banlieue,” and asked Michelot if he ought to accept it.

“By all means,” said the professor. “You will have plenty of practice, which is precisely what you want, and you will learn more there than I can teach you.”

His first essay was at Montmartre, where he soon found that, if practice makes perfect, he was destined to have an ample share of it. The constant change of performances, entailing on the very limited company the assumption of every kind of part at the shortest notice, speedily familiarised him with the routine of theatrical life; and being naturally blessed—like Mr. Lenville, of nose-pulling memory—with a “quick study,” he was looked upon by the management as a precious recruit, and utilised accordingly. His connection, however, with the “banlieue” was not of long duration. Among the members of the *troupe* was a certain Prosper Gothi, a low comedian of some humour, of whom such flattering

reports had come to the ears of M. Dartois, then director of the Variétés, that he came one evening to Montmartre for the express purpose of seeing him act. On this occasion Bressant happened to be cast a part which exactly suited him ; and Dartois, charmed with his good looks, and determined not to miss the opportunity of securing for his theatre so agreeable a representative of young lovers, at once engaged him at a salary of a hundred francs a month. Prosper Gothi was likewise approved and enlisted, and the brothers Seveste were thus deprived at one fell swoop of the only two actors who had succeeded in establishing themselves in the good graces of the public of Montmartre.

For some time after his promotion to the Variétés, Bressant's position was by no means an enviable one. His manager, anxious as he appeared to add him to his company, neglected to profit by his acquisition, and, beyond entrusting him with an unimportant part in a piece which only lived a few nights, allowed him to vegetate in complete obscurity. Finding himself thus unaccountably shelved, Michelot's pupil applied for a short leave of absence, which was readily accorded him, and gladly accepted the proposal of Perlet to accompany him on a professional visit to London, among his fellow-travellers being the charming Jenny Colon, "biondina e grassotta," as Theophile Gautier has it. After a tolerably successful campaign of a few weeks he returned to his post early in 1833 ; and, although failing to please the critics in "Les Amours de Paris," made a decided hit as Beppo in "La Prima Donna."

From that evening his merit as a young actor of the greatest promise was universally recognised ; his co-operation in forthcoming novelties was insisted on by the leading authors of the day, and Dartois' brother, more keen-sighted than the manager, and who had taken a fancy to him from the beginning, enthusiastically declared that the "lad" would be a fortune to the theatre. Bressant's crowning triumph, the Prince of Wales in "Kean," by the side of Frédéric Lemaître, attracted the notice of the committee of the Comédié Française, and an engagement was offered him, which fell through, owing to an inconsiderate act of his own, which he afterwards bitterly repented. Always susceptible where the fair sex was concerned, he had recently married Mdlle. Augustine Dupont, an actress of moderate ability, and daughter of the *chef de claque* of the Variétés ; and, fearing

that his departure might possibly affect the receipts of that theatre, and as a natural consequence the interests of his father-in-law, declined to accept the proposal, pleading his minority as a sufficient reason for refusing it. As it unluckily turned out, the union was in no respect a happy one. Constant bickerings arose between husband and wife; and at length, seeing no prospect before him of domestic tranquillity, he entered into negotiations with General Guedeonoff, director of the French theatre in St. Petersburg, and secretly started for Russia, thereby subjecting himself to a fine of twenty thousand francs, for the payment of which the imperial treasury became ultimately responsible.

The capital of the Czár was at that period regarded by Parisian actors as an El Dorado difficult of access, but a land of inexhaustible plenty for the chosen few. The theatre, almost exclusively patronised by the Court and nobility, rivalled the Comédie Française in the excellence of its company, including such well-known celebrities as Paul (the ex-“jeune-premier” of the Gymnase), Volnys and his accomplished wife, and Madame Allan-Despréaux. Bressant, whose arrival had been preceded by whispered reports of his talent and personal attractions, industriously circulated by the astute Guedeonoff, was received with marked favour, and soon found himself in the enjoyment of a popularity which his artistic merits, undeniable as they were, perhaps hardly justified. The ladies with one accord voted him charming, and their approval once secured, whether their husbands—more sceptically inclined as a rule—were equally enthusiastic, or the reverse, mattered little. Such, at least, was the opinion of the new comer, who, during his long sojourn at St. Petersburg, made it his especial business to please his patronesses; and in some respects, as it happened, succeeded only too well. Unlike the majority of his colleagues, who saved up all they could of their earnings as a provision for the future, he lived in a style which even his very liberal salary scarcely warranted, and allowed no prudential considerations to interfere with the gratification of a passing whim. Flattered, moreover, by the undisguised preference, of which he was the object, on the part of certain high-born dames, he appears to have responded somewhat too readily to their advances; and on one particular occasion to have embarked in an adventure which—according to rumour, for he himself was always loyally discreet on the subject—

ultimately drew upon him the displeasure of the Court, and abruptly terminated his career in the city of the Neva.

Returning home from a bear hunt late in the afternoon, he was informed that an officer of the Imperial household awaited his arrival, and lost no time in obeying the summons. His visitor saluted him with grave courtesy.

"Monsieur," he said, "I am charged to deliver into your hands a sum of ten thousand silver roubles. A carriage is at the door ready to conduct you to Paris, and you are enjoined to proceed on your journey without a moment's delay."

"But, Monsieur," objected Bressant, disagreeably startled by this unexpected communication, "I have debts and other matters to settle before leaving St. Petersburg, and ——"

"You need not trouble yourself on that score," interrupted the officer. "Whatever you owe here will be paid after your departure."

"At least, allow me time to pack my trunks."

"That is unnecessary. All your belongings will be sent to any address you think proper to give. Besides, you will find in the carriage everything you are likely to want until you reach Paris."

Bressant did not venture to say that he wished to pay some farewell visits preparatory to starting, comprehending that any discussion on this head would be worse than useless; but, resigning himself to the inevitable, was on his road to France before nightfall.

My personal knowledge of this excellent comedian dates from his appearance at the Gymnase, February 21, 1846, in "Georges et Maurice," since which period, until nearly the close of his professional career, I rarely missed an opportunity of witnessing the gradual development of his talents, first as *jeune premier* and subsequently as *premier rôle*. The acquisition of so brilliant a recruit was of inestimable advantage to M. Montigny's company, already one of the best in Paris, and including such popular favourites as Numa, Ferville, Lafontaine, Lesueur, Mdlles. Rose Chéri and Désirée. Nowhere could his graceful ease of manner and pleasant geniality have been more thoroughly appreciated than in a theatre, the habitual frequenters of which had an instinctive horror of anything approaching coarseness or vulgarity, while keenly relishing that mixture of gaiety and sentiment which formed the leading feature of the nightly bill of fare. It was not,

however, until the production of "Clarisse Harlowe," in August of the same year, that he fairly took the town by storm. His Lovelace was a revelation, and proved that, if he had hitherto displayed every requisite qualification for light comedy, he was equally excellent in drama. He had, moreover, the exceptional good fortune of being associated in this piece with Rose Chéri, than whom a more exquisitely sympathetic representative of the heroine could not have been desired; and, thanks to their joint attractions, the adaptation of Richardson's masterpiece enjoyed a long and profitable run.

Of the forty-two original "creations" by Bressant during his stay at the Gymnase, from 1846 to 1854, those which, after Lovelace, most advanced his reputation, were unquestionably the following:—"La Protégée sans le Savoir," "Horace et Caroline," "Le Canotier," "Le Piano de Berthe," "Un Fils de Famille," "Philiberte," and "Diane de Lys." In all these he was charming, and, as M. Francisque Sarcey truly remarks, might have continued for another ten years to delight the public of the Boulevard Bonne-Nouvelle, had not fate, in the person of an all-powerful minister, willed otherwise. In direct opposition to the established regulations of the Comédie Française he was named *sociétaire* of that theatre, without the obligation of passing through the intermediate stage of *pensionnaire*, a somewhat arbitrary proceeding, but against which there was no appeal. His future colleagues naturally resented this infraction of their privileges; and Brindeau, who had more cause than others to dread the coming of so dangerous a rival, at once sent in his resignation, which, doubtless to his secret mortification, was immediately accepted.

The *début* of the new "sociétaire" took place February 6, 1854, as the hero of "Mon Etoile," a one-act comedy, written expressly for the occasion by Scribe, and as Clitandre in "Les Femmes Savantes;" in the first his success was complete, but in the second he failed altogether. Such a result might have been anticipated in the case of any actor who, accustomed to the dialogue of contemporary writers, finds himself suddenly called upon to interpret the language of Molière without previous experience of its difficulties, and wholly unacquainted with the traditional mode of delivery and intonation. No one recognised his incompetency more readily than himself; once convinced that a course of hard

study was indispensable, he set manfully to work, and in less than three years succeeded in mastering the thirty or forty parts comprising the current repertory, ancient and modern, not omitting at the same time to conciliate his fellow actors by soliciting their advice on points where his own inexperience was necessarily at fault. By this judicious policy he entirely dissipated the prejudice they had previously conceived against him, and soon became as universal a favourite with his comrades as he had never ceased to be with the public.

His first signal triumph in the "house of Molière" was Almaviva in the "Barbier de Séville," a part affording full scope for the display of his most attractive qualities, and so admirably suited to his artistic capabilities that it is more than doubtful if even Molé, the original representative of the character, could have surpassed him. In "Turcaret" and "Le Jeune Mari" fresh laurels fell to his share, and of his creation of Octave in "Les Caprices de Marianne" perhaps the best criticism was that of a lady who, in answer to the charge made against him by a partisan of Brindeau that he was always the same, "toujours Bressant," retorted: "Précisément, et voilà pourquoi il est toujours charmant!"

It is an established custom at the Théâtre Français that an actor holding the position of "*premier rôle*" should at some period or other undergo the crucial test of interpreting the two most difficult characters in the repertory, "The Misanthrope" and "Tartuffe." It cannot be said with truth that Bressant absolutely succeeded in either; his Alceste lacked the impetuous energy of his predecessor, Firmin, and was at the best a tame performance; while the absence of every physical qualification for the part rendered his conception of the "demure, sensual hypocrite" a complete anomaly. As George Henry Lewes happily expresses it: "His appearance and manner were those of a handsome young curate who has committed a forgery, and cannot conceal his anxiety at the coming exposure." Indeed, except in the earlier scenes of "Le Festin de Pierre," where he looked Don Juan to the life, I never remember seeing him to advantage in Molière; whereas in Marivaux he was quite at home, and vied with Madame Plessy in a lively interchange of *bardinage* in "Les Fausses Confidences" and "Les Jeux de l'Amour et du Hasard." On Madame Allan's return from Russia, she brought with her Alfred de Musset's exquisite little comedy, "Un Caprice," which had been

represented for the first time at St. Petersburg. Bressant and Mdlle. Judith completed the cast, and so perfect a specimen of all-round acting no one, in our generation at least, is likely to see again.

In 1875, threatened with incipient paralysis, this genuine, and in many respects unrivalled, artist wisely retired from the stage, but continued for some years to officiate as professor of elocution at the Conservatoire. Of his pupils, as far as I am aware, the only one who has as yet fully realised, and even surpassed his expectations, is that delightful actress, Mdlle. Sophie Croizette.\*

## A Remembrance.

DEAR, shall I count the two short happy years,  
 And say: On such a day we laughed and sung ;  
 On such a morning mingled bitter tears ;  
 And here—'twas in the twilight—here you flung  
 A gentle arm around me ? Truly, Sweet,  
 In dear Love's calendar such things are set,  
 And I in cuckoo-cadence could repeat  
 Each jewelled memory, nor one forget.

Or rather, shall I whisper (while the air  
 As tho' a cluster of white lilies stirred  
 Grows sweeter at your name) that everywhere  
 The sun falls brighter, every tiny bird  
 Sings purer melody, and all the flowers  
 Wave with a fresher beauty since that morn,  
 . . . The happy herald of yet happier hours . . .  
 This prescience of a future love was born.

An April morning, with its showers and shine,—  
 A girl's young presence with its worldless charm,—  
 In glad remembrance in this heart of mine  
 I shrine these images. And if the calm  
 Of future Springtides holds a hidden bliss,  
 To flash the love-light in your glorious eyes,  
 One prayer I'll whisper—that our silent kiss  
 Find place amongst your April memories.

M. E. W.

\* Bressant died at Nemours, January 22, 1886, in his seventy-first year.

## "Hamlet" at the Porte-Saint-Martin.

BY JOSEPH KNIGHT.

A FLYING visit to Paris in March enabled me to pay my respects to the recently-appointed director of the Théâtre Français, and to witness the representation of "Hamlet," given at the Porte-Saint-Martin, under the care of Mdme. Sarah Bernhardt. Paris on the morning of my arrival was knee-deep in snow, and the appearance at six o'clock a.m., of the streets, full of early travellers plodding through the "slush," with the conical hoods of their coats drawn over their heads, gave the once picturesque city a more mediæval look than I have seen it assume since the quaint old architecture of streets that witnessed the entrance of Henri IV. gave place to the long boulevards that saw the exit of Napoleon III. and the appearance of the Prussian. M. Claretie is a handsome, intelligent-looking man, with enough firmness of character to hold in hand the eminently turbulent, quarrelsome, and self-opinionated members of the Comédie Française, and with a courtesy and distinction of manner contrasting strikingly with the official and *noli me tangere* airs of his predecessor. The visit is only worth mentioning inasmuch as, together with M. Mounet-Sully, M. Claretie and I discussed the forthcoming revival of "Hamlet" at the Théâtre Français, in which M. Mounet-Sully is to take the principal part and the merits of Mr. Irving's performance, of which all were well aware. With a knowledge of French proceedings towards English artists and writers—the result of long experience—I had provided myself in the Place de l'Opéra with a numbered *fauteuil d'orchestre* for the Porte-Saint-Martin, and was thus able to dispense with the unnumbered admission which, on my return from dinner, I found awaiting me. The application to the management which had brought me this reply was due only to the fear that a seat might be unobtainable through ordinary channels, and that a delay I could ill afford would be necessary if my visit to Paris was not to prove fruitless. To the general public these details may

seem trivial. It is for the benefit of the few only that I point the contrast between the reception accorded in London to every French artist and that certain to attend in France one with the strongest claim to consideration.

Though central in situation, the *fauteuil* I occupied was cramped and inconvenient, and in no way to be compared with the stalls at any second-class London theatre. On the depressing influence to an Englishman of a house in which the women without exception wear bonnets, and the men are all in morning dress, on the absence of an orchestra, and on the noise of the vendors of "L'Entr'acte," "L'Orchestre," and other newspapers serving the place of play-bills it is needless to dwell, since all visitors to Parisian theatres are familiar with these or other similar conditions. I may add, however, that at the close of each of the eleven tableaux into which "Hamlet" is divided, the signal for the reassembling of the actors is given by three knocks on the floor, which at the Théâtre Français is the sign for the ascent of the curtain. After a delay of one or two minutes three further knocks are given. A further delay rather shorter than the previous is followed by the ringing of a bell and the ultimate raising of the curtain.

When, at a quarter-past eight, this was lifted, the scene exhibited was the State rooms at Elsinore. The scene which in the original, with unexampled dignity and appropriateness, opens out the action with the mention of the Ghost whose presence, seen or unseen, is to dominate the tragedy, is—out of deference to some French superstition—omitted. So far as regards the general appearance, the playgoer might believe himself in England at a country representation. The traditions of the English stage are, so far as dressing the characters is concerned, closely followed. Laertes, the King, the Queen, and the nobles and pages in waiting are the same as have been seen a hundred times. In the case of Polonius, some change—attributable to the idiosyncracy of the actor by whom it is taken—is evident. The sententiousness of the old chamberlain has disappeared; he is a garrulous and cheerful old gossip, caring far less for his dignity than for a hearing, and completely enamoured of his own wit. The reading is defensible, and is the only representation in the play at once important enough to invite criticism and ingenious enough to pass unchallenged. From the first, however, it is obvious that such interest as the performance possesses must be derived from the

two central characters. The first appearance of Hamlet is prepossessing. In the hands of M. Garnier—favourably recalled for his performance of Justinian in "Théodora"—he is a handsome, well-built, manly-looking fellow enough, with blonde hair à la Fechter, and with an easy bearing and picturesque appearance. In these things, however, the entire merit of the performance is found. Like his predecessor, Fechter, M. Garnier mistakes Hamlet for an amorous *jeune premier*. No such insight as was displayed by Fechter is, however, shown, and the performance lacks the beauty, gallantry, and colour which, in Fechter, disposed one to pardon the absence of any adequate conception of the character. M. Garnier is, in fact, not Hamlet at all. The sombre questionings of destiny, the recoil from the discharge of a duty acknowledged to be imperative, the varying moods, the contest between simulated madness and genuine mental derangement, the thousand conflicting influences and emotions which go to make up the most composite and the most interesting character in the drama, trouble not this exponent. In the scenes with Ophelia, he is at times tender; in the presence of the Ghost, he bears himself with a fair show of filial reverence; Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are treated with a certain measure of sarcasm; the King, in the play scene, is glared at with sufficient ferocity; and the Queen is subsequently lectured with exemplary indignation. So the performance progresses until a poorly-fought duel and a grotesque slaughter of the King brings to an end an impersonation respectable as a display of physical resources, but otherwise of no account.

The Ophelia of Mdme. Sarah Bernhardt may not be thus summarily dismissed. As to conception, it is not greatly superior to the Hamlet of M. Garnier; but, as to rendering, it is another affair. That the selection by Mdme. Bernhardt of the character of Ophelia was unwise was felt by most English judges. Among Shakespearean characters there is probably none so unsuited to her means as this. It is easy to fancy Mdme. Bernhardt as "the gentle lady wedded to the Moor." There are, indeed, scenes in "Othello" in which her supreme method might produce results with which the modern playgoer has no acquaintance. The virginal sweetness and fragrance of Ophelia approach, however, near to the *ingénue* type, and to show her a passionate woman abandoned wholly to her love is to be false to the very spirit of the character.

This, however, Mdme. Bernhardt does, and all the genius she displays, and all the resources of her unparalleled method, fail to reconcile us to the reading. When first seen in her father's house, looking stately and beautiful as Guinevere, holding the small framework on which she is weaving a pattern of flowers or birds, she is passionately in love with Hamlet, and ripely content with the declaration she has just received of his returned affection. To justify this faith the poetical epistle of Hamlet, which in the English play is read in a later scene to the King and Queen by Polonius, is introduced in the second scene, and is read by Ophelia to Polonius, who is questioning his daughter concerning the intentions of Hamlet. Concerning these Ophelia has no doubt. Radiant and rapturous in self-content, she bends down her eyes brimming with happiness, and listens with no thought of doubt or mistrust to the suggestions of her brother and the more outspoken counsels of her father.

In proportion as her faith in Hamlet is firm at the outset, her perplexity and grief at his sudden withdrawal of his affection are tearful. That his brain is touched she knows, but she is none the less distracted at his bearing. With eyes streaming with tears, she listens to his cruel words, throwing herself finally in front of a picture of the Virgin, whose intercession she piteously invokes. As a picture of love and distress this is delicious. It has, however, little to do with "Hamlet."

In the play scene Mdme. Bernhardt yields for a moment to the delusion that Hamlet's love has returned, and that matters are once more right. In obedience to his own suggestion, Hamlet lies almost in her lap. His head, which rests on her knees, she gently fans, and she stoops over him with a caressing affection which renders her insensible to the presence of her father and the court. Soon, however, perceiving that, whatever else is occupying his attention, it is not herself, she turns listlessly to the play, and watches it until the King's fright and the passionate outbreak of Hamlet send her, in common with the rest of the company, scared from the chamber. This is her last appearance before her loss of reason. That the phenomena of madness and unrest would be superbly shown by Mdme. Bernhardt was doubted by none. Her performances in the love scene of the fourth act are, indeed, in their way, matchless. In place of the outbursts of song to which Ophelia ordinarily gives way, Mdme. Bernhardt

delivers, in a plaintive chaunt, a ballad concerning herself and her Valentine, which introduces some of the verses quoted by Shakespeare. Her mournful intonation and her startled gaze when Horatio crosses her path, though they do not reconcile one to the change that has been made, extort admiration. A full tribute of tears is accorded her in the scene with the wild flowers, which, instead of being braided in a coronal, descend in a falling spray with her hair. The action with which she accompanies the bestowal of each is, like the words she utters, charged with more significance than the original text warrants. A direct prophecy of evil to the King is thus delivered. Very striking, however, is the manner in which, after giving the queen a bunch of rue, she, instead of taking from her gathered skirt a fresh spray to weave with the other flowers and herbs in her hair, snatches back a spray of that the Queen has taken. After this, with a renewed obeisance to the King and Queen, she takes her final departure.

She is once more seen with her face rigid as marble, and her body, covered with flowers, carried upon a bier to the churchyard. This innovation cannot be regarded as a new reading. It is simply a matter of stage arrangement. Its advantages are that it supplies a scene picturesque in itself, and that it introduces Ophelia in the last act, to the interest of which—at least, from the standpoint of the actress—it may be held to add. This gain is accompanied by drawbacks far more than compensatory. In the first place, it involves the abandonment of a portion of the rites already "maimed." The body is no longer placed on the bier. Neither Laertes nor Hamlet can, according to stage directions, jump into the grave beside the corpse, or claim to "be buried with her quick." The short, fierce struggle of the two men begins across the corpse over which, at its outset, Laertes is bending. When no distinct and emphatic gain attends a departure from the expressed intention of Shakespeare, the mere irreverence of such a proceeding is in itself its condemnation.

In spite, then, of the beauty of the art of Mdme. Bernhardt, nowhere more noteworthy and conspicuous than in this performance, the representation, from an English standpoint, is a failure. "It is not—nor it cannot come to—good," inasmuch as it is not the heroine Shakespeare created and the English-speaking world has since adored. The more clearly it demonstrates the possession by the actress of gifts wholly unique and exceptional, the more

does it dissatisfy those who have most closely studied the character it is sought to expound.

Of the general rendering of the play it is difficult fully to treat, inasmuch as a printed version of the text has not yet seen the light. Of all measures, the French Alexandrine, with its recurrent rhymes, masculine and feminine, its cæsura, and its general inflexibility, is the least adapted to convey the meaning of Shakespeare. More than one prose French version has recently seen the light in Paris, and such would be in all respects better than the adaptation of MM. Cressonnois and Samson, in which neither the poetry nor the humour of Shakespeare can be retained. It may be doubted whether the impotence of this metre for the task forced upon it is more forcibly illustrated in the soliloquies of Hamlet or [in the garrulous passages of the Gravedigger or of Polonius. Almost all that is vital has, at least, disappeared in the passage through the alembic of translation.

One of the most important omissions is that of the speech of Hamlet to the players concerning the manner in which are to be pronounced the lines he has written. It is conceivable that these lines may be regarded in France as suitable to our own actors, but needless and impertinent as regards those of France in general, and of the Porte St. Martin in particular. The disappearance of Osric, whose euphuisms are not readily translated into French, is more pardonable, since the character is not always preserved in England. The Stilo Culto, however, known as Gongorisme or Marinisme, which reached France from Italy through Spain, might serve to reproduce the speech of Osric, and Hamlet's half-amused, half-contemptuous retort which, it may be remembered, was given by Mr. Irving with matchless effect. Some changes, regrettable in all respects, are due to the exigencies of the stage as now arranged. Hamlet thus no longer follows the Ghost to a more retired part of the ramparts, where he may without other companions receive its portentous message. After vainly striving to alter Hamlet's determination to obey the courteous gesture of the Ghost and follow it, Horatio and Marcellus themselves withdraw and leave the Ghost to speak his mind on the spot at which he first appears. This is a sufficiently unsatisfactory arrangement. Not much better is the manner in which the Ghost reaches the platform, ascending with bent knees from some staircase in the wall. As a substitute for the

gliding movement of the Ghost as ordinarily seen this is very poor. Far better is the scene in the Queen's chamber, wherein the picture of the deceased King on a panel, to which Hamlet points, for the purpose of contrast with that of the reigning King, worn by the Queen as a remembrance, becomes endowed with ghostly life, and glides across the room. Least defensible of all the alterations is the manner in which the scene in the Royal closet of attempted prayer on the part of the King is arranged. Entering into the Queen's chamber, as yet unoccupied by the Queen, the King delivers there the lines beginning "O, my offence is rank; it smells to heaven." Having spoken these, he withdraws to some shrine or oratory adjacent. From the Queen's chamber Hamlet can see this shrine on his left hand, and to the kneeling King he addresses the speech, "Now might I do it pat; now he is praying." The arrival of the Queen and the cry of alarm, with the call for help of Polonius, and the murder behind the arras to the right follow, and Hamlet then asks if his victim is the King whom the moment previously he has seen elsewhere.

Some speeches ordinarily omitted are restored, and at the close of the action Fortinbras appears. With these things I will not concern myself. Enough has been said to show that the performance, so far from possessing any claim upon consideration in England, is in the main not only unimportant, but unintelligent. The chance of seeing Madame Bernhardt in any character is not to be despised. This great actress, however, will not add to her laurels by her last assumption. It is to be hoped, if she again attempts Shakespeare, some character widely different from Ophelia will be chosen. In Paris even the success is only relative, and at the time I write the withdrawal of Shakespeare in favour of M. Sardou has been announced.



## Some Old Olympians.

BUILDINGS have a history just like men and women ; famous houses could tell many things if brick and stone had the power of speech ; and a theatre, in particular, has often a more chequered existence than the rank and file of edifices. London theatres have not been exempt from the usual vicissitudes of their kind, and the Olympic, if we make a choice, presents a very good instance of this ebb and flow of fortune. Many plays of worth have first met the light behind its proscenium, not a few actors and actresses of note have gained some of their greatest triumphs on its well-worn boards, managerial reputations enough have been won and lost within its precincts. The old theatre has in its day been beloved alike of gods and of ordinary mortals, its walls have often rung with the cheers of approving audiences, its echoes have sometimes been wakened by the groans and hootings of angry and disappointed playgoers. Its situation is just now a little outside the general run of dramatic enterprises, and the façade in Wych Street, in the very heart of the Drury Lane district, stands out as if defying an unfriendly land. The noises of Clare Market, and the rumble of the traffic in the Strand are often borne towards it, and the hansom speeding northwards dashes by it. Now, if we look back not so very far down the stream of time, we shall find many rocks and sunken trees marking the points where one manager found fame and profit, and another great undertaking foundered and went down. Lightly snapping up no mere unconsidered trifles but reminiscences of the Olympic's more palmy days, may be the searcher may bring the reader to share with him in the pleasure thus to be found.

The name of the late Alfred Wigan is the first that we propose to mention in connection with the Olympic Theatre. An actor of great refinement, polish, and skill, Mr. Wigan leaves behind him the reputation of being the best French-speaking artist and impersonator of French characters on the English stage in his day ;

in this accomplishment his laurels have fallen to those clever actors, Mr. G. W. Anson and Mr. Beerbohm-Tree. Mr. Wigan became manager of the theatre in Wych Street in 1853, and in conjunction with his wife achieved great success in every department of the enterprise. Two plays by the late Tom Taylor were first produced at this time, both of which still continue to be played alike in London and in the provinces. These were "Plot and Passion" and "Still Waters Run Deep." The John Mildmay of Mr. Wigan was one of his most famous characters. An able co-operator in these plays was Mr. Emery, a comedian of great ability and merit. It was in "Plot and Passion" that Mr. Frederick Robson first showed that he could take a high place among actors of serious parts, and was not merely a burlesque actor and low comedian as his previous career might have led casual observers to imagine. Mr. Robson had done excellent service for the Olympic under Mr. Farren's management, just before Mr. Alfred Wigan took the theatre. In Talfourd's burlesques of "Macbeth" and "Shylock" Mr. Robson had made a great *furore*, while his famous Jem Baggs, in "The Wandering Minstrel," confirmed him in the position of being a most original actor. With Mr. Wigan he followed up these great and conspicuous successes; and his triumph as Desmarests, in "Plot and Passion," found a counterpart at a more opposite pole of dramatic art in Planché's well-known burlesque "The Yellow Dwarf." We may note that from his first engagement here in 1853, up to his premature death in 1864, Mr. Robson was always one of the chief lode-stars of the Olympic public. Another tower of strength vouchsafed to Mr. Wigan's company, who, like Frederick Robson, had already won laurels enough at this house, was Mrs. Stirling. Under Mr. Wigan many leading parts were played by this estimable and talented actress whose name has cast so bright a lustre on the stage. Her Lady Teazle won great favour; she was in the original cast of Tom Taylor's "To Oblige Benson;" and all her other performances maintained the high standard that ever marked Mr. Wigan's productions. The help given to him by his wife in every branch of this four years' enterprise as manager cannot be over-estimated or too highly praised. After this period of hard work and success—both artistic and financial—Mr. Wigan at last quitted the Olympic. He had previously introduced his brother, Mr. Horace Wigan, to London audiences.

Next came the partnership of Mr. Emden and Frederick Robson, an epoch fruitful both in good plays and in good acting. The actor-manager continued his series of burlesque performances, which showed how closely tragedy touches upon the lighter vein of acting. In "Medea" and in "Masaniello" he again carried the public along with him ; while graver and more impressive performances reminded thoughtful people of his genius in parts requiring intensity and vigour of style. But ill-health, later on, made his appearance somewhat fitful. The dramatists who wrote for Mr. Robson were men of mark, such as John Oxenford, Palgrave Simpson, Maddison Morton, Tom Taylor, and F. C. Burnand. In several plays Mr. Horace Wigan added to his growing reputation, sustaining good parts in "The Porter's Knot," "Nine Points of the Law," "A Husband to Order," and other pieces by these and other writers. Mrs. Leigh Murray was also in the company, and Mrs. Gaston Murray was the heroine in several of Mr. Burnand's burlesques. "The King of the Merrows; or, the Prince and the Piper," a lively burlesque composed by Mr. Burnand and Mr. Palgrave Simpson, enabled Mr. Robson to score a great success in the part of the Piper, topical songs in abundance being given to the actor-manager. Another important incident was the engagement of Miss Amy Sedgwick, who played here for some time in various revivals, as "Plot and Passion" and "The School for Scandal," and also in new pieces, an example of which was Mr. Palgrave Simpson's comedy, "Court Cards." These illustrations are proof enough both of the strength of the acting and the freshness of the plays under Mr. Robson.

One of the most promising recruits that joined Mr. Robson was the man whose name and style of acting were henceforward to be associated with the Olympic for so many years. This was Mr. Henry Neville, in his prime the *beau ideal* of heroes of romantic drama, at once strong, brave, chivalrous, and generous in his own well-known line of characters. Mr. Neville first appeared at this house in 1861, and two years later, he and Mr. Horace Wigan helped to bring about one of the greatest successes ever achieved in the way of melodrama. Melodrama pure and simple this was ; orthodox melodrama ; stereotyped if you will, without the adventitious aid of realistic shows, revolving scenes, mimic railways, fires, and the like, Tom Taylor's stirring adaptation from the

French, the perennial “Ticket-of-Leave-Man,” attracted crowds to the house in Wych Street, brought a golden harvest to the treasury of the management, and placed Mr. Henry Neville at one bound in the very front rank of the heroes of melodrama. From this time he was destined to be seen often struggling against adversity and mocked at by fortune, but always on the side of the right and victorious before the fall of the curtain on the fifth act. The character of the Lancashire lad, Bob Brierley, unwittingly led into error and thenceforward resolutely striving to be honest and true, gave Mr. Neville his opportunity; and no one who ever saw the play could fail to approve the sterling qualities and robust, manly style of this born interpreter of valiant modern knights-errants. Mr. Horace Wigan, too, did wonders as the detective who plays the part of *deus ex machinā*. In the scene in the deserted ale-house, where Brierley, in the garb of a navvy, sits disconsolate, muttering to himself, “Who will take this letter?” a splendid stage effect is produced when the disguised detective steps forward calmly and in clear accents pronounces the simple words, “I, Hawkshaw.” The earnestness of Mr. Neville and the nonchalant but decided manner of Mr. Wigan worked up the spectators to a pitch of excitement, and caused one of the best *coups de théâtre* seen on the melodramatic stage. Mrs. Stephens, one of the mainstays of the Olympic for fourteen years, was the original Mrs. Willoughby in this drama, Mrs. Gaston Murray also being in the cast.

A year after this, on Mr. Robson’s death, Mr. Horace Wigan himself assumed the reins of management, and remained connected with the Olympic until 1869. The list of plays produced at this period is certainly varied enough, while the measure of success obtained was also an undefined variable quantity. John Oxenford was among the dramatists who supplied Mr. Wigan with new plays, while Tom Taylor, with the laurels of “The Ticket-of-Leave-Man” fresh upon him, was very prolific in his work. Miss Nellie Farren, it is interesting to note, was a member of Mr. Wigan’s company for two years—1864-66. During this time she played many characters, both in drama and in burlesque, besides being the clown in the revival of “Twelfth Night,” to which we shall have again to refer. Mr. J. G. Taylor, now so well known in the different lines of low comedy, burlesque, and character-acting, made his first appearance in London in an Olympic farce.

Mr. Taylor has certainly had as diversified an experience as any one in his profession. Miss Lydia Foote also took a large share in the performances of more serious drama, her acting in Mr. Wilkie Collins' "Frozen Deep" deserving particular mention. The dramatisation of Miss Braddon's novel, "Henry Dunbar"—December, 1865—was a very important addition to the roll of Olympic success, and enabled Mr. Neville to strengthen still further his hold upon the public favour. Mr. Neville was supported by Miss Kate Terry, whose artistic playing as the heroine, Margaret Wentworth, gave much *éclat* to this stirring melodrama. Indeed this was another red-letter day in the career of the Wych Street house. Another play in which Mr. Neville again struck home to the imaginations of his audiences was "The Yellow Passport," which he had himself adapted from Victor Hugo's powerful and touching romance, "*Les Misérables*." The reader will remember the convict Jean Valjean, who makes his escape from the Toulon galleys, and, after various adventures, settles down in a provincial town, of which he becomes Mayor. Mr. Neville played with great force, particularly in the affecting scene where the benefactor of the place, beloved by all his fellow-towns-men, stands revealed as the ex-convict, Jean Valjean. Miss Furtado and Mr. Wigan played in this drama—November, 1868.

Miss Kate Terry, to whom we have just referred, the eldest of a quartet of talented sisters, was of great help to Mr. Horace Wigan during her two years' engagement at the Olympic. She played leading parts in several more of Tom Taylor's dramas, as, for instance, "The Hidden Hand," "The Settling Hand" and "The Serf," besides in "Love's Martyrdom," by Mr. Leicester Buckingham, and in the revival of "Twelfth Night," at this theatre, she doubled the parts of Viola and Sebastian, Mr. Wigan being Sir Andrew Aguecheek. Twenty years later London playgoers witnessed a sister and a brother acting the characters once assumed by their elder sister. Again the youngest of the Terry family—Miss Florence Terry—created the character of Little Nell in Andrew Halliday's version of "The Old Curiosity Shop," produced here in 1870, while a few years later her sister, Miss Marion, first appeared in London at this same theatre.

In the interval before the production of "The Yellow Passport,"

while Mr. Neville was winning laurels enough at the Adelphi and elsewhere, a change came over the character of the Olympic Melodrama and domestic drama vanished from the scene, and Thalia tripped on merrily, bringing with her her chosen votaries. Throughout much of the years 1867-68 Mr. Charles Mathews and his wife figured prominently in the Olympic bills; and the programme of the theatre necessarily assumed a lighter and less serious form. Planché's comedy, "Lavatly," was one of the early productions, while Mr. Mathews' own version of Foote's play, "The Liar," showed the dramatising skill of the actor, and enjoyed a brilliant and successful run.

Farces by Maddison Morton displayed the comic talent of the company, and the revival of Thomas Morton's comedy, "The Way to Get Married," gave Mr. Mathews the opportunity of rivalling Elliston and other famous actors of days gone-by in the part of the volatile hero, Tangent. The names of Mr. Horace Wigan and Mr. Addison, besides those of the Mathews, are sufficient proof of the strength of the company, and the return of Mrs. Stirling to the stage so familiar to her made the cast still stronger. In the two plays of a somewhat kindred nature Mrs. Stirling endowed with actuality the character of the hard, clear-headed "Woman of the World"; both in Stirling Coyne's comedy, thus entitled, and an adaptation, "From Gay to Grave," from a play of Scribe, this actress formed the central figure, her performance of Lady Driver Kidd in the latter piece being remarkably good. Chas. Mathews played many other light parts in his well-remembered and inimitable style, but the dramatisation of Mr. Yates' novel, "Black Sheep," made by the writer in collaboration with Mr. Palgrave Simpson, caused playgoers a great and not unwelcome surprise. Mr. Mathews and his wife here appeared in quite a new line, characters of the most tragic and pathetic kind being filled by them not without success. An incident that should not pass unnoticed was the appearance of the American actresses, the Sisters Webb, in an arrangement of the play that had brought them fame throughout their own country. This was "The Grasshopper," based on George Sand's story, "La Petite Fadette." The talent of the actresses was recognised as it deserved, but the speculation was not a pecuniary success. Another adaptation, called "Fanchette," was produced four years later by Mr. Bateman at the Lyceum, Mr. Irving then playing the part of Landry.

which, in the Olympic version, Mr. Clayton had played in such an admirable way. This, it should be said, was very early in Mr. Clayton's London career. Mr. John Clarke, so clever and popular a comedian, must also be reckoned among the Olympians of this period; his Sarah Gamp, in a dramatisation of "Martin Chuzzlewit," was a very humorous and amusing performance. He and his wife, Miss Furtado, also played in one of the extravaganzas with which the management constantly tried to flavour the entertainments. After the return of Mr. Neville, and after the production of his adaptation of "Les Misérables," the chronicle of the Olympic becomes for a brief space somewhat sparse. However, we may note the revival, early in 1869, of Watts Phillips's comedy, "Paper Wings," which applied forcibly to the disclosures with regard to speculative enterprises just then made public. In this play, Mr. Neville, Mr. Wigan, Miss Furtado, and Miss Maria Harris took part, and Mr. Watts Phillips had reason to pride himself upon the fact of having four pieces of his running at the same time. But the period was one of stagnation in theatrical enterprises, especially so far as concerned the production of plays of any high standard as literature.

In the autumn, the theatre passed under the management of Mr. W. H. Liston, who made an auspicious beginning of his enterprise by producing "Little Em'ly," a version of "David Copperfield," by that skilful playwright, Andrew Halliday. This was a great success, Mr. G. F. Rowe attracting much notice by his impersonation of Micawber. The late Samuel Emery played Peggotty, and Miss Patti Josephs, Miss Fanny Addison, Mr. Charles Warner, and Mr. John Nelson were included in a very strong company. The piece ran for some time, and obtained the honours of a revival in the following summer. Various changes were made in the cast, Mr. David Fisher being successor to Mr. Rowe. It is interesting to observe that the original version of Mr. W. S. Gilbert's "Princess Ida" was brought out here, under the title of "The Princess." The music used was by Offenbach, and Mr. Fisher took the part recently assumed by Mr. George Grossmith. The performance of a version of "Frou-Frou" requires comment, mainly as illustrating the then prevalent competition between several theatres for the production of plays taken from the French; in this case the St. James's was the rival of the Olympic. A revival of Tom Taylor's domestic drama, "Mary

Warner," brought Miss Bateman to this theatre, her powerful acting in the part of the heroine being supported by Mr. W. H. Vernon, Mr. Belmore, Mr. W. Blakeley, and her youngest sister then called Miss Frances. In another play by Tom Taylor, the principal character was sustained by Mr. Compton, while the company consisted of most of the artists above-mentioned. Andrew Halliday's dramatisation of the "Old Curiosity Shop" called forth the admirable performance of Mr. John Clarke as Quilp, the little Nell being, as already said, Miss Florence Terry. Two spectacular pieces in verse, written by Mr. Reece with some imagination and fancy, showed signs of a probable restoration of the poetic drama. The subjects of "Undine" and of the fairy couple, "Oberon and Titania," gave scope for the abilities of the actors engaged, and also for the employment of elaborate scenery. More important, however, was the production of Mr. Byron's idyllic play, "Daisy Farm." This piece maintained its ground for more than ninety nights, which was a considerable time in the era before the prevalence of the "long-run" system. Mr. Charles Warner made his first success in "Daisy Farm," and Miss Fanny Hughes, too, assisted the histrionic efforts of the author himself. Relapsing into his lighter mood, Mr. Byron wrote a clever burlesque for this theatre, called "Giselle," for which Mr. Hollingshead, the manager of the still new Gaiety Theatre, lent the services of Miss Nelly Farren.

In October, 1871, a noteworthy dramatic event was the inauguration here of the stage version of Wilkie Collins' melodramatic novel, "The Woman in White." The adaptation followed tolerably closely the lines of the book, and the interpretation given to it caused a decisive success. The double part of the heroines, mad and sane, was well played by Miss Ada Dyas, and Marian Halcombe was impersonated by Mrs. Charles Viner, now Mrs. Arthur Stirling. Mr. George Vining was the enigmatical Italian, Count Fosco, and the "juvenile lead" was assigned to Mr. Wybert Reeve. After a while, Mr. Vining fell ill, and his part was taken by Mr. Reeve, who, hitherto known chiefly as a provincial actor, had made a successful first appearance in London two years before at the Lyceum as John Mildmay. Now, however, a more favourable opportunity presented itself, and the Count Fosco of Mr. Wybert Reeve achieved great popularity. It was, indeed, a per-

formance of great skill, full of knowledge of stage *technique*. Mr. Reeve looked and acted the part to the life. In him we saw the unwieldy old ex-revolutionary tenderly fond of his pet canaries, playfully affectionate to his wife's *mélange*; but, notwithstanding, ruthless in the prosecution of his dark intrigues, ready to crush all who stood in his path, and destined finally to perish at the hands of the emissaries of that secret society which he had formerly betrayed. Mr. Reeve was admirable as this strange character, and a long list of performances, begun at the Olympic, shows the pleasure which audiences have found in his acting. It was now reserved for a most truthful delineation of woman's character to give added brilliancy to the annals of the Olympic. This was Miss Ada Cavendish, who had been already acting for four years in serious drama, and had reached a high place among the leading ladies of the London stage. Coming to this house early in 1873, Miss Cavendish made a bold attempt to be ranked among the very foremost in her profession. The attempt was successful, and the gallery of heroines received an important addition. "The New Magdalen," by Mr. Wilkie Collins, enabled Miss Cavendish to put forth all her strength, and Mercy Merrick, as represented by her, remains one of the most striking—though, perhaps, not one of the most agreeable—characters of recent melodrama. Some people have objected to the morality of this play, finding fault with the apparent glorification of the courtesan and with the premium thus offered to repentant vice. The cogency of this argument we are not altogether prepared to deny; but still, as a piece of forcible and often touching acting, Miss Cavendish's Mercy Merrick was freely recognised to have been of a very high order. The skill of Mr. Frank Archer added to the success of "The New Magdalen," and Miss Ernstone played her part with pleasing, natural simplicity. Ever since then, the announcement of "The New Magdalen," with Miss Cavendish's name in the bills, has drawn crowded houses all over the country.



## Præterita !

Donec non alia magis  
Arsisti neque erat Lydia post Chloen;  
Multi Lydia nominis  
Romana vigui clarior Ilia !      HORACE.

WE met and parted, when we both had youth !  
Under life's finger-post ! Yes ! you and I !  
You were on pleasure bent : I sought the truth,  
We have both felt the darkness of love's sky !  
Men with their faithlessness have tortured you,  
I have known women false, and pure as well ;  
We meet again ! I look to heavens blue,  
You ring despondently fate's dismal knell !

You meet me with your beauty unimpaired,  
I greet you with dull sorrow in my face ;  
You, with your haunting face, that souls ensnared—  
I with a past, no praying can retrace !  
You can remember nothing—you are fair !  
The roses all are dead that you have smelt ;  
You sit and laugh at men who loved your hair—  
I sigh for dear, dead kisses I have felt !

I pity you ; you only smile at me—  
I who have only felt what you have found !  
You calmly face despair and misery,  
I scent love's violets above the ground.  
Yet you have lived your life, as I have done,  
And led men on to love you with despair ;  
God grant ! when all is over, there'll be one  
To kiss *my* memory and breathe one prayer.

No taint of world has killed the woman yet,  
It beats in every fibre of your frame ;  
I have forgiven ! must you still forget  
Love's purity in Love's absorbing shame ?  
You can afford to laugh—I needs must pray ;  
Grey mists of distance clasp the landscape green ;  
Had we not parted at life's weary way,  
Who knows—we neither can—what might have been ?

Ramsgate, February, 1886.

C. S.

## Our Musical-Box.

ALTHOUGH the unexampled severity of the weather throughout the past month proved highly prejudicial to the interests of concert-givers and executant artists, some few musical entertainments of exceptional merit attracted large audiences, and were crowned with entire success. Chief amongst these were the triumphant *rentrée* of Signor Piatti on the scene of his unnumbered glories, with physical powers happily unimpaired by the terrible accident of which he was the victim some months ago ; the coalition of Madame Norman-Néruda and Herr Joachim, the two most brilliant stars of Mr. Arthur Chappell's constellation of violinists ; the perfect playing of Mdlle. Clotilde Kleeberg, who has attained the topmost heights of virtuosity, and is perfectly at her ease in those all but inaccessible regions ; and the deft and delicate pianism of Signor Albanesi, at whose excellent concert Mr. William Shakespeare put forth all the charms of his mellifluous voice and incomparable vocalism, to the delight of all who heard him, expressed in enthusiastic plaudits, despite the restraints of etiquette imposed upon the audience by the presence of Royalty. In contrast to these and other musical successes, achieved in the very teeth of the most dire east wind that ever swelled the mortality bills, and of a commercial depression such as London has not suffered, until this spring, within my remembrance, a dismal failure, culminating in a public scandal wholly without precedent in the annals of Italian opera, has to be recorded in connection with the past month. The *histoire intime* of the *impresa* that hired Her Majesty's Theatre a few weeks ago has yet to be told—probably in a court of justice—and will be found, when it attains publicity, to afford some very curious exemplifications of human disingenuousness and credulity. All that need be said about it in this place is that it was started with insufficient pecuniary means ; that it engaged vocalists whose presentation on the stage of a great metropolitan theatre was an insult to the London musical public ; that of those who trusted to its promises—instrumentalists, soloists, chorus-singers, supernumeraries *omnium generum*, carpenters, scene-shifters, &c., not one was paid his or her wages ; and that when it utterly collapsed, on the eighth night of its brief and miserable existence, its wretched victims appealed *in formâ pauperis* to the public it had wronged and outraged, entreating that public to have compassion upon their sufferings, and to give them alms wherewith they might buy bread to stay the pangs of hunger ! A more piteous spectacle has seldom been seen than that which was displayed upon the stage of Her Majesty's Theatre on the night of March 6,

1886. I fear, too, that this disgraceful episode dealt a heavy blow at the prospects of Italian Opera in London. They were melancholy enough before the Carillon scandal ; now they are lugubrious. *Non ragioniam dolor, ma taci e passa.*

The announcement has reached me that Mr. Hamilton Clarke is about to give a double course (one to ladies, the other to gentlemen) of twenty-four lectures on the Art of Composition at the Royal Polytechnic Institution during the coming months of April, May, and June. Eight of these lectures will deal with orchestration, a subject upon which few living Englishmen are better qualified to expatiate with profit to musical students than Mr. Clarke, who has achieved high distinction both as a conductor and composer of orchestral music. The excellence of the musical performances at the Lyceum, whilst under his direction, has not been yet forgotten by the *habitués* of that theatre. Mr. Clarke is a thinker and an enthusiast, as well as a ripe musician ; the enterprise he has undertaken is by no means a light one, but, unless I be much mistaken, he will prove fully equal to its fulfilment. What his immediate aim is in giving the course of lectures above alluded to may be gathered from the following extracts from a letter which I received from him some weeks ago, when he first acquainted me with his intention to discourse in public upon the "mystery" in which he is so profoundly versed. "Why do I say 'the Art of Composition?'" he wrote. "Because since the days of Jubal, as far as I know, there has never been given to the world a single school-book treating of the artistic side of composition. . . . I have had this design under consideration ever since the time at which I first read some of the stunted and pedantic utterances put forward in books on musical theory. My wish is, according to my modest and imperfect lights, to give to my fellow-workers in musical art a few hints calculated to show them a ready way to solve certain problems which authors of the past and present have rendered obscure by enveloping them in tangles of pompous phraseology, the outcome of bigoted pedantry and pretentious ignorance. I wish to point out to those who will listen to me that there are certain paths in music to discover which is only vouchsafed to one man of a whole nation, once in fifty years, or may be a century ; and which, therefore, casual students will do well not to seek for. Instead of giving all musical aspirants to understand that composition is an 'elegant accomplishment' which can be acquired by the aid of learned books and judicious teachers, I want to offer to those elect who have in them the divine afflatus a good deal of careful guidance and timely assistance in such efforts as they may make to deliver themselves of their offspring, and thus to save them from wasting their time in fruitless labour. Touching with a light hand upon the ancient dogmas hitherto held essentially necessary to the achievement of musical salvation, I shall not, for instance, limit myself to telling my hearers that consecutive fifths are to be avoided, simply because they are wrong ; but shall endeavour to demonstrate *why* that particular sequence is objectionable, when it results from a composer's ignorance or carelessness, in contrast to cases in which it has been used by great minds with

excellent effect. Such, roughly sketched, is my general design. I will not weary you with indications of what new structures I hope to set up, or of how many square miles of venerable edifices I hope to pull down." If Mr. Hamilton Clarke's lectures fulfil the promise set forth in the above excerpts from his letter, they can hardly fail to constitute one of the most interesting—not to say sensational—musical features of the approaching season.

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Few literary feats are more difficult of achievement than that of rendering in our language the exact significance and feeling of any of Richard Wagner's dramatic poems, whilst maintaining anything like a metrical resemblance between the translation and the original. In one or two of the clever imitations of his *libretti* that have hitherto appeared in print, accuracy of reproduction, in connection with word-meanings, has been sacrificed to the desire to observe his alliterative, rhythmical and rhyming methods, or tricks. The results have been ingenious, but unsatisfactory—marvels of patient contrivance, wrought in a humble and loving spirit, but failing to convey to the English mind or ear an English equivalent to the Wagnerian poetry, which is certainly no less remarkable an utterance of genius than is the Wagnerian music. At length, however, an Englishman has come to the front with a translation of "Tristan and Isolde"—perhaps the finest of Wagner's poems—who has had the courage to resist the temptations assailing an interpreter of Wagnerian verse in the shapes of alliteration, rhythm, and rhyme, and to give us the exact meaning of every line and word occurring in the original *libretto*. Mr. Frederick Jameson, a German scholar of no ordinary calibre, and an accomplished musician to boot, is the author of this latest addition to our Wagnerian literature, and has turned out a noble piece of work. His sole aim has been to render "Tristan and Isolde" exactly into English; as he frankly admits, he has made no attempt to imitate the metre of the original, as to do so would have been to render verbal accuracy impossible. But the family likeness existing between the German and English tongues has caused many of Mr. Jameson's lines to fall naturally into rhythm. In a prefatory note he points out that the words of any Wagnerian opera, considered apart from their setting, convey a very inadequate idea of the artistic harmony of the tone-poem's whole conception. Through the agency of music, the composer is enabled to retard or accelerate the action of his play, "so that the comparative length of scenes in reading is no gauge of their relative duration in performance. Words and sentences, moreover, are emphasised and dwelt upon to the exact extent desired, and frequently have a new significance given to them by associations awakened by means of musical phrases; while pauses are prolonged, on the other hand, in a manner impossible in spoken drama." The music of a Wagnerian opera is not only the complement of the text, in short (and *vice-versâ*), but both music and words are the outcome of the same inspiration, and either is necessarily incomplete without the other. To those, however, who are unable to read "Tristan and Isolde" in German, or to witness its performance

in its entirety, Mr. Jameson's faithful and spirited translation will at least impart some notion of the nobility and beauty of that admirable drama.

Talking of Wagner, the readers of THE THEATRE will not have failed to take some cognisance of the controversy that has lately raged in the columns of the Parisian press with respect to the proposed production of "Lohengrin" at the Opera House—a controversy in which some of the most eminent French writers of the day—Madame Adam amongst their number—have conspicuously taken part. French Chauvinism has so far triumphed in this unseemly contest as to cause the adjournment *sine die* of the production in question; but it has also furnished that gifted *littérateur* Catulle Mendés with an opportunity—of which he has availed himself with praiseworthy courage—for publishing some highly interesting personal reminiscences of the great Saxon Master, at whose house Mendés was a frequent visitor when Wagner lived at Zurich. I need, I think, make no apology for reproducing in translation part of one of these word-sketches, which recently appeared in the "Annales Politiques et Littéraires":—"More than once, calling upon Wagner early in the forenoon, we found him arrayed in a strange costume, which he especially affected; a loose jacket and trousers, made of gold-coloured satin, richly embroidered with flowers, executed in beads. He was passionately fond of lustrous stuffs; his drawing-room and study teemed with silks and velvets, heaped up on the couches and chairs, or hanging from the walls, their only function being a purely decorative one. To gaze upon them gave him infinite pleasure. Whilst awaiting dinner, which was always served punctually at 2 p.m., we were wont to talk with him in a large bright room, the four windows of which were always open to admit the mountain air. During these conversations he never sat down; indeed, I do not remember to have seen him seated, save at table, or at the piano. He would talk almost incessantly, however, whilst striding up and down his spacious *salon*, moving the chairs about from one spot to another, feeling in all his pockets for his snuff-box, which he had invariably mislaid, or for his *pince-nez*, which was sometimes discovered in the strangest places—once, for instance, hanging to one of the glass prisms of the chandelier; his velvet cap, all on one side, generally pulled down over his left brow, where it looked like a black cockscomb, or crumpled between his clasped hands, or thrust hurriedly into his waistcoat pocket, whence he would again nervously pluck it forth and twist it into all sorts of shapes with his sinewy fingers. He often talked about Paris, speaking of it as 'a city which he loved, because he had both hoped and suffered in it'; with the tenderness and anxiety of an exile, he used to enquire about the streets in which he had resided, and in which had for the most part suffered considerable changes under the Haussmann *régime*. I saw his eyes fill with tears one day when he was told that a corner house of a certain street had been pulled down. When he was excited—which was really his chronic condition—a torrent of talk flowed from his lips; lofty thoughts, plays upon words, paradoxes, anecdotes, sometimes sentimental, sometimes bitter, sometimes purely comic or fanciful, succeeded

one another uninterruptedly. Now giving way to loud outbursts of uncontrollable merriment, and again speaking in hushed tones, with tears in his voice, then breaking out into a rapture of prophetic ecstasy, he delivered monologues no less remarkable for their variety of subject than for their strong emotional contrasts. In one, which I particularly remember, he successively touched upon the dramatic plots he had composed in his dreams, on *Parsifal*, the King of Bavaria, the tricks which Jewish orchestral conductors had played him, the subscribers to the Paris Opera House who had hissed down Tannhaeuser, Madame de Metternich, Rossini, 'the most lavishly endowed of all musicians'; the beggarly music-publishers, the theatre he intended to build 'on a hill near a town,' and to which people should throng from every country of Christendom; Sebastian Bach, Auber (who had been very kind to him), and his resolve to write a comedy intituled '*Luther's Wedding*.' Besides, he told us at least twenty anecdotes about his political adventures in Dresden, the visions of his childhood, his intercourse with Weber, his acquaintanceship with Madame Schroeder-Devrient—'dear, most admirable woman,' he said, with a heavy sigh—and the death of Schnorr, the tenor who created the rôle of *Tristan*, of whom he spoke with the deepest emotion. We were completely under his spell; we laughed and wept with him by turns; we saw the visions that he had seen; we were carried away and overpowered by the terrors and charms of his impetuous eloquence."

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I have often observed that the German-American of the second or, at most, third generation is far more prone to be down upon the institutions artistic and social as well as political, of the Fatherland than is the Yankee of Anglo-Saxon or Celtic extraction. This curious characteristic has found conspicuous exemplification quite lately in the person of Mr. Florsheim, the editor of the *New York Musical Courier*, whose name leaves no doubt as to the nationality of his ancestors. This able writer, has been taking a holiday in the land of music and sauerkraut, poetry and liver-sausage, and has come to the conclusion that, as far as musical culture is concerned, Berlin is not "in it" with New York, or, for that matter, Germany with America. "In the German capital," he writes, "I was present at musical performances, applauded by the public and lauded by the press, which would scarcely have been tolerated in New York, where we are accustomed to a higher standard of executant proficiency than are Berlin audiences, and therefore insist upon being supplied with good vocal and instrumental performances. During the forthcoming season we shall certainly enjoy more frequent opportunities of hearing musical novelties, adequately performed, than will the inhabitants of the German capital; moreover, we shall be catered for by Italian and German, as well as by English opera companies. The concerts given in New York are of far better quality than those provided for German audiences; musical entertainments of the importance, completeness, and grandeur that characterise the Philharmonic Concerts directed by Theodore Thomas are seldom, if ever, organised in Berlin. We are also

far ahead of the Berliners in the number of the classical concerts given in New York during our annual musical season. With respect, therefore, to our facilities for enjoying the most precious treasures of the divine art, as well as to many other privileges which perhaps we do not sufficiently appreciate, let us be thankful that our lot is cast in America instead of in Germany!" There is solid foundation in fact for the comparisons instituted by Mr. Florsheim between New York and Berlin, to the latter's disadvantage; but such disagreeable truths about the musical decadence of the Fatherland, which is only too manifest in the creative as well as the executant branch of the art alluded to, fall with an ill grace from the mouth of one whose patronymic proves him to be a German by blood if not by speech.

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The extraordinary bitterness and persistency of Heinrich Heine's attacks upon Meyerbeer in verse and prose during the last few years of the poet's life have remained unexplained to the public at large until quite lately, when certain revelations made to the editor of the *Neue Musikalische Zeitung* by M. Julia, the trusted friend of Heine's widow, cleared up the mystery. It appears that, when the intimacy of Meyerbeer and Heine was at its zenith, the latter wrote what he called a "Dance-Poem," and entrusted it to his friend—at that time all-powerful in Berlin—to arrange and bring it out as a ballet at the Royal Opera House. Months went on, but nothing was heard of "Mephistophela"—thus the poem was named—and Meyerbeer took no notice of Heine's enquiries respecting its fate. Eventually, however, it was returned to him, and immediately afterwards the ballet "Satamella"—constructed on the lines of "Mephistophela"—was produced at Berlin. Heine soon found out that it was his crony Leibmann Beer (Meyerbeer) who had played him this dirty trick, and forthwith commenced a pen-and-ink war upon him, which lasted for several years. Shortly before Heine's death, Meyerbeer came to Paris, and, hearing of Heine's sufferings, which were terrible, went to see him. Heine received him cordially, and it was agreed that the old grievance should be forgiven and forgotten. A fresh one, however, speedily accrued, reviving and even augmenting Heine's resentment. In former years the poet and his wife had enjoyed free access to Meyerbeer's box at the Opera House; and after the grand reconciliation Meyerbeer offered to renew this privilege. Next day he forwarded to the Heines two tickets, which, however, proved to be made out for places in a second tier corner box, usually occupied by females of more than doubtful virtue. The sending of these objectionable vouchers eventually turned out to have been a mere box-office blunder; but Heine chose to consider it a deadly personal insult, offered to him intentionally by Meyerbeer, and thenceforth until the day of his death, which occurred not long afterwards, he assailed the composer daily with all the most venomous shafts of his literary quiver. Amongst other invectives to which he gave utterance in print at that time was the following:—"I consider the grunting of pigs, or their squeals when they are about to be slaughtered, objectionable noises, but I prefer them to the music of the renowned maestro Beermaier!" When Heine

died, Meyerbeer inquired of the poet's widow whether she had found amongst her late husband's MSS. any verses hostile to him (Meyerbeer), and, should any exist, offered to buy them of her. Madame Heine, however, would not take money for the anti-Meyerbeerian lampoons she found amongst Heine's papers, but very generously destroyed them.

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I hear that Johann Strauss is about to embody the musical reminiscences of his youth in an opera, the leading *motivi* of which are to be revivals of dance-tunes composed by him when he was a lad, studying engineering against his will. His boyhood, as well as that of his brothers Joseph and Edward, was spent under the roof that sheltered his renowned father, whom, however, he seldom saw; for his parents were separated, and for many years lived in different storeys of the same house, the Strauss boys having been judicially assigned to their mother's care. All three developed remarkable musical ability at an early age, and, when still in round jackets, were familiar figures in several musical *salons* of Vienna, where they constantly played their father's compositions, and sometimes their own. Their musical feats of course reached old Strauss's ears, much to his gratification: but he made no sign until, several months having elapsed since he first became aware that they were acquiring celebrity, it struck him one day as absurd and unnatural that he should be about the only musician in the Kaiserstadt who had never heard any of his own sons' compositions. Forthwith he sent a message to his wife, who occupied apartments above his own, but two flights higher, to the effect that he would esteem it a favour if she would permit his sons to pay him a visit. His request was granted at once, and the three boys were ushered into their father's presence. But, strange to say, the "Waltz King" (as the Viennese had christened Strauss the elder) had no piano-forte in his rooms. What was to be done? After some hesitation, he decided upon sending another message upstairs to ask Mamma Strauss to lend him her piano for an hour or two. Presently down came the piano, and the boys began to play—first their father's music, and then their own. The old man's delight was unbounded; he embraced them over and over again, gave them his blessing, and then sent them back to their mother, together with the piano and his "compliments and thanks!"

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During the past month I received a good many new musical publications calling for unfavourable mention, from which, however, I beg leave to refrain, and two pretty P.F. compositions; the one, a waltz, called "Mariquita" (Morley and Co.), by Herbert Dering, a musical Etonian of no inconsiderable promise, and the other a *morceau d'occasion*, hight "Jollification" (Ascherberg and Co.), by Arthur Le Jeune. The latter is provided, as an extra attraction, with a humouristic title-page, uncommonly well executed.

WM. BEATTY-KINGSTON.

## Our Play=Box.

### “SISTER MARY.”

A new play, in four acts, by Wilson Barrett and Clement Scott.  
Produced at the Theatre Royal, Brighton, on Monday,  
March 8, 1886.

Captain Walter Leigh ...	Mr. LEONARD BOYNE.	Rose Reade .....	Miss MAGGIE HUNT.
“Sandy” Dyson .....	Mr. H. COOPER CLIFFE.	Miss Kate Malcolm ...	Miss BLANCHE HORLOCK.
Colonel Malcolm.. ....	Mr. WILLIAM HOLMAN.	Miss Lucy Carroll .....	Mrs. A. M. MOORE.
Harry Reade .....	Miss PHÆBE CARLO.	Miss Arabella Perkins	MISS MARIE FRASER.
Jack Maddison .....	Mr. A. T. DARWIN.	Miss Agatha Malcolm	Mrs. CANNINGE.
Jack Davis .....	Mr. H. FENWICK.	Charity Binks.....	Miss RETTA WALTON.
Bill Dredge .....	Mr. H. V. LAURENCE.	Susan .....	Mrs. CARLO.
Corporal Molloy .....	Mr. R. DALTON.	Miss Mary Lisle .... ...	Miss LINGARD.

“Sister Mary” is one of the best of modern plays. The story is original, pretty, and well told; while the dialogue is of more than common merit. The “poetical justice” of the piece has been called into question, but this subject is discussed on another page of this number. Here is the story of the drama:—

The scene of the first of the four acts is laid in the summer time at Rivermead, on the Thames, where resides Mrs. Rose Reade, a pretty, interesting woman, who has to support an only child by means of dressmaking. She has attracted the attention of Colonel Malcolm’s niece, Miss Mary Lisle, generally known as Sister Mary, and warmly loved by all her neighbours for her goodness of heart and simplicity of manner. She offers to educate Mrs. Reade’s boy, and, in a pretty and touching scene, elicits from her the confession that she was a mother without being a wife—that, in fact, her boy is illegitimate. She was ruined years ago by a young officer who has not contributed to her support, because he could not find her after her disgrace. Mary swears to befriend the repentant woman, come what may. They are to be friends for life. Scarcely has Mary left her friend, when a scoundrel named Davis enters, and, to his surprise, finds in Rose Reade, *née* Fisher, the girl whom he had loved all his life, and whom, even now, he is anxious to marry. Rose indignantly refuses to listen to him, and he threatens to tell the whole village of her shame, when Miss Lisle enters. She is on the point of being grossly insulted, when Captain Walter Leigh, unseen by Rose, enters and strikes Davis on the wrist, bidding Mary go home. This Leigh is a morose, brandy-drinking fellow, who seems on the verge of destruction when he meets, in an early part of this act, Mary Lisle, who induces him to give her the brandy from his flask instead of drinking it himself. The woman is interested in the strange, despondent man, while he is attracted by the beauty and purity of the woman. The sympathy thus created between them is made the stronger by the situation at the end of the act, in which Leigh saves Mary from the insults of Davis. The scene of the second act—the prettiest, most effective, and best written in

the play—is laid in a lovely glen in North Wales. Leigh has completely reformed, volunteered in the army, and gloriously distinguished himself. He is painting in the glen when he meets Mary once more. She is on a visit with relations, and has never seen Leigh since her sudden meeting and parting with him twelve months before at Rivermead. A charming scene occurs between Leigh and Mary. Neither professes love, but it is pretty clear what it will lead to. He owes all his success in life to her influence ; she is charmed that she has made a hero out of a rake. They depart, in the summer sunset, full of unexpressed love. Scarcely has Mary gone when Leigh remembers that two hulking tramps—one of whom was Davis—have gone in the same direction that she has taken. Leigh follows, but misses Mary, and the girl re-enters, followed by the desperate tramps. They are proceeding to rob and assault her when Leigh comes to the rescue, and a desperate fight occurs, in which Leigh's arm is broken. Assistance arrives, the scoundrels are secured, and as Mary bends over Walter Leigh in pity and admiration he tells her that he would give his life for her. The third act takes place at the country seat of Colonel Malcolm. It is the wedding morning of Sister Mary and Walter Leigh. By a happy accident bride and bridegroom meet. They renew their love pledges just before meeting at the altar, and Leigh, who has had misgivings regarding a certain Rose, who had been ruined years ago, stifles his conscience, and tells Mary that he has never loved before. A visitor is announced, and Leigh goes away. The visitor is Rose Reade, who now wishes Sister Mary to educate her boy. Sister Mary consents, but insists upon knowing the name of the boy's father. It is Walter Leigh. Mary is at first paralysed with the news. But she makes up her mind to take the boy, and when Leigh returns once more she tells him the story and dismisses him, a heart-broken man, as she falls fainting at the sound of the bells ringing for a wedding that is not to take place. The scene of the fourth act is an outpost improvised fort at the Cape during the Boer campaign. It is a very dangerous position, and Captain Leigh has just been appointed to command it. Sister Mary is at the war, attached as a hospital nurse to the ambulance. Her relations with Leigh are strained. At an adjacent farm, a missionary station, Rose Reade happens to be, and there she is guarded by Sergeant Davis, the tramp in former acts, who has reformed, enlisted, and still loves his old flame. Rose arrives with an escort in search of hospital supplies. Several touching scenes follow between the women, when Rose departs with the escort on her way back to the farm. They have not got far when it is signalled that the escort has been attacked. Not a moment is to be lost. Captain Leigh is in a dilemma. Shall he go and rescue Rose, a "forlorn hope," and leave the fort where Mary is unprotected? Shall he save one woman at the expense of the other? His duty is to both; his love is with one. Urged by Mary, he starts with a small force to try to beat back the rebels, and to go to almost certain death. He takes farewell of all he loves, and

sets out. Great excitement prevails in the fort. If Leigh fails, they will all be killed. But Leigh turns the rebels, and is in pursuit. Into the terrified fort comes Sergeant Davis with a pathetic story. Poor Rose was the first to fall, and she died commanding her boy to Mary and begging her to forgive the man who loved her so. Leigh behaved like a hero, and saved the life of Davis with the very arm that Davis once broke. At last Leigh arrives back at the little fortress, safe and sound. He is received with ringing cheers by his comrades, and it is strongly hinted that no long time will pass before he marries Sister Mary.

It is fortunate that the part of the heroine in this play is allotted to so admirable an artist as Miss Lingard, an actress capable of powerfully portraying emotion without becoming maudlin. The aspect of womanliness and goodness is also excellently expressed throughout by Miss Lingard in a performance which is remarkable for its thorough naturalness. The impersonation is as pretty as it is pathetic, and as powerful, where power is necessary, as it is pathetic. High praise is due to Mr. Leonard Boyne for his consistent, intelligent rendering of Walter Leigh. He understands the character exactly. He has got inside it, and the result is a perfect presentation of the character as it has been conceived by the authors. On the first night, in Brighton, Mr. Boyne was decidedly too subdued in his acting. He played in too low a key. I have since seen "Sister Mary" in Liverpool, and can assure those critics who fell foul of Mr. Boyne's "reserved force" that his performance is now as free, as bold, as unrestrained, as it is thoughtful, impressive, and effective. Mr. Cooper Cliffe is agreeably light and easy and of great service as Dyson, and Miss Maggie Hunt is the most interesting Rose Reade imaginable. A brilliant hit has been made by Miss Retta Walton, whose clever acting in the small part of Charity Binks makes her a conspicuous and welcome figure in the play. Another small part, that of the coquettish old maid, Miss Agatha Malcolm, is entrusted to the experience of Mrs. G. Canninge. The Colonel Malcolm of Mr. William Holman is of service to the play, and the tramps are well represented by Messrs. H. Fenwick and H. V. Laurence. Bright, lively Kate Malcolm is played by a new, pretty, and promising young actress, Miss Blanche Horlock, one of the best ingénues I have seen. Miss Horlock should have a successful future before her. She has everything in her favour, but she would do well at this early stage of her career to cultivate a more distinct and thoughtful delivery, and to avoid that fault so common amongst actors to-day of scarcely sounding the last word in a sentence. Young Harry Reade is allotted to an intelligent child actress, Miss Phoebe Carlo. Mr. A. T. Darwin, Mrs. Augustus Moore, and Miss Marie Fraser have little to do, but do that little well.

AUSTIN BRERETON.

## “DOO, BROWN AND CO.”

An original farce, in three acts, by C. M. RAE.  
Produced at the Vaudeville Theatre on Thursday, March 11, 1886.

Montague Doo ...	Mr. THOMAS THORNE.	Pounds ...	Mr. FULLER MELLISH.
Major Rufus Peppercorn ...	Mr. CHARLES GROVES.	Mrs. Peppercorn ...	Miss SOPHIE LARKIN.
Indigo Leo ...	Mr. CHARLES GLENNY.	Lily Forrester ...	Miss HELEN FORSYTH.
John Dobbins ...	Mr. FRED. THORNE.	Eveline Doo ...	Miss MAUDE MILLET.
Philander Spiffkins ...	Mr. E. M. ROBSON.	Susan ...	Miss LOUISA PEACH.
Paolo Romboli ...	Mr. J. WHEATMAN.		

In this lively, obstreperous piece what is called “farcical comedy,” has been carried to the extremest verge. “Confusion” itself, with the adventures of its baby concealed in a cabinet, was mild and tame compared with this. We may, indeed, be on the eve of a new departure, having exhausted the catalogue of trivial mistakes, concealment in rooms, &c. In this boisterous revel, where the fun never flags, we have these ingredients:—A lay figure of a Roman Emperor in a red robe, whose place is taken by two of the characters in succession; a revolver is fired by a fierce major, and the original lay figure falls prone; a lady is locked up in a room, and, to make her security yet more secure, the key is thrown into the fire, whence it is removed and placed in the door, burning, of course, the fingers of anyone that touches it; fire-eating major fires into his own toe; a picture, “by Rubens,” is fitted on a picture dealer’s head, like a horse collar; another performer puts his own face in the place of the portrait, as Mrs. Bancroft does in “Masks and Faces,” only here an angry sister draws a streak of black paint across the face (certainly we think too lightly of these minor disagreeables, which add to the discomforts of the players’ life); duels are fought with knives and forks—all of which elements tend to make the fun fast and furious, after the fashion of the Palais Royal. That this piece is of French origin has been pointed out, for Mr. Rae is now the chief and most successful adaptor of French dainties. Amateurs owe him what is perhaps the most popular and oftenest acted of drawing-room plays—“A Fair Encounter”; and “The Man with Three Wives” now runs—gallops rather—at the Criterion. The origin of the piece would be plain from a single passage, where one of the characters is always saying of his employer, “Such an artist! such a photographer!” which is an un-English phrase—“Quel artiste! Quel—” &c.

Mr. Thorne played, as he always does, with much point and “reserved force” of drollery. Like Dean Swift, who would write in a Brown study, or Garrick, who would “act a gridiron,” Mr. Thorne can make a character out of anything. Miss Millett, who played his daughter, acted with an intelligence surprising in one who may be considered, without flattery, the prettiest of our young actresses. It was preceded by Mr. Calmour’s interesting short piece, “Cupid’s Messenger,” now running beyond its hundredth night. It is carried through by Miss Mary Rorke, who plays her part in a very dashing, spirited way.

PERCY FITZGERALD.

## MRS. LANGTRY AS "PAULINE."

There is a curious unexplained attraction in the evergreen play of "The Lady of Lyons" which, like "The Vicar of Wakefield," pleases in youth as in age. Every actor and actress of good looks pants for the opportunity to figure as the truly romantic hero or heroine, though the former, when played with rapturous passion, not with the "force" stored in accumulators, engrosses all the effects and applause. Familiar as the old piece is, it is impossible not to follow it with interest, so workman-like is the construction, while every character is telling in its way.

One of the points to be admired in Mrs. Langtry is a certain force of character, a perseverance joined with a sagacity in exploiting her gifts, which seems likely to lead her on to fortune. To see a good man struggling with fortune is, we are told, an ennobling spectacle; but to follow a beautiful and intelligent woman in her pilgrimage over the sharp stones of the histrionic road is more interesting to even a cynical observer. Month by month she gains, and hostile critics are softened and gratified by such painstaking exertion. She is gradually finding the measure of her capacity; and little failures, such as attempting bursts of obstreperous emotion, have shown her that there weakness lies. On such occasion her voice escapes from control, and acquires a rather inharmonious diapason. But at this moment it may be said that if we take our regular actresses—few enough, and compare her with them, faults and all—it must be owned that she has a power of interesting and giving pleasure by her tones and movements, that is one of the secrets of dramatic expression. Into her eyes and face she can call at times a soft dreaminess and languor, opposed to the hard reality of expression, which so many affect; and there is a sweetness of tone in her utterance that is singularly welcome. Pauline is certainly the character that suits her best—from its gentleness, devotion, and womanly grace. It is, besides, a charmingly sympathetic character, always high in favour with audiences. Not less attractive is it because of the high-waisted costumes, which some hold to be ugly, but are certainly classical and pleasing to the eye. Her first dress was white, with delicately-embroidered borders—designed, as were the others, by Mr. Harper Pennington. These "robes" helped much in the series of graceful and natural postures assumed during the play. There were many passages where the heroine has to be at rest, while others move and speak, and she exhibited some very natural and appropriate "by-play," as it is termed, always a difficult sort of exhibition. Indeed, in all the unobtrusive emotional passages where love, womanly interest, and sympathy were at work nothing could be better; there was only one passage where she wrought herself up to a studied burst, when the effect was rather artificial and declamatory. The whole play was got up with due taste, and without obtrusive adornments. How stirring always is the close of the fourth act, when the hero goes to the wars, and the Marseillaise, ever stirring and kindling, is heard without—a situation "cribbed," it must be said, in spite of *de mortuis*, by the late Mr. Robertson for the most stirring scene in "Ours." Mr. Coghlan was a pleasing and judicious Claude, with

much art, abolishing or sinking the tinsel raptures which so verge on the ridiculous when mouthed *secundum artem*. This sort of reading is, in my opinion, immense improvement on the old school of ranters—the robustious, bare-necked, red-necked veteran, who ludicrously bounds in, after winning the prize, with a “Mother, I have won the prize!” There remains, however, the famous “Dost like the picture?” which no ingenious reserving of force will get over. Claude’s costume in the first act, too, had a suggestion of the Torèador in “Carmen,” without its magnificence. All the other characters were judiciously played. The whole exhibited refinement and care; and Mrs. Langtry may be congratulated on what is the best of her performances.

PERCY FITZGERALD.



## Our Omnibus=Box.

The heroism of Walter Leigh—the character so admirably, intelligently, and passionately played by Mr. Leonard Boyne in the new play, “Sister Mary”—has been variously debated by many who have with such frankness and good nature criticised the play. It was inevitable that it should be so, because Walter Leigh is outside the rank of theatrical heroes. His virtue is not oppressive. He is no blustering Pharisee. He has done wrong, and he owns it; and so proves himself to be the noblest kind of hero. Your stage hero is immaculate. He never has sinned, and apparently he never would sin. In youth he would, doubtless, knock any boy down who innocently surveyed a girl’s garters! He is wonderful in his virtue, always ready to rescue the oppressed at the right moment, and his mouth brimming over with Pharaical platitude and goody-goody sentiment. The exact antithesis to all this is Captain Walter Leigh. He moralises, and owns his weakness. And so he has been considered by very well-meaning persons no hero at all, and it has been decided that “poetical justice” has not been meted out to the woman whose life was burdened by his crime.

Let us trace the life of Walter Leigh. In early life, young, thoughtless, with character half formed, and with morality unbraced, he did a woman an irreparable wrong. He was vicious, but he was not heartless. The woman he had injured got out of his way. She never saw him again. She made no claim on him. She lived her life, and bore her sorrow apart. She passed utterly out of his life. If she loved him, and idolised still the father of her unhappy child, he, at least, did not encourage it. She soberly bore the penalty of her sin; he went from bad to worse, without her hand to guide him. In this predicament he meets Sister Mary, an absolutely ideal woman. Their sympathies immediately unite. Their hearts come together. Her sudden influence is so great that he reforms. He pulls up. He becomes a man again, and not a sot. He rejoins the army, is brave, wins renown and the Victoria Cross, and on the high tide of his success meets the woman who has saved him, and wins her devoted





"The storm clears the weather and our sunshine is to come."

THE HARBOUR LIGHTS.

*Jessie Millward*

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love. On the marriage morning the sins of his past life rise up before him as a spectre. His forgotten crime comes to judge him. Sister Mary discovers that the woman her lover had ruined is her best and dearest friend, and that she loves him with an undying and unutterable love. Hideous position! This man and woman, who literally idolise one another, have to part for ever when the wedding bells are dinging into their distracted ears.

Years pass, and the two women and the man meet amidst the horrors of war. The women are nursing the sick; the man is doing his duty as a soldier. How is this life drama to end so that "poetical justice" may be awarded? It has been argued that such justice can only be given by killing Sister Mary, and marrying Rose Reade to the man who injured her, but who could never love her! She owns that she loves him, but he could never love her. She has borne her martyrdom in silence; why not give her the martyr's crown in death? How would she be made happier by uniting her to a man who idolises Sister Mary, and whose death to him would be estrangement from all women for ever? If Walter Leigh is correctly drawn, he could not by any possibility marry Rose after Sister Mary's death. He would support her and her child, look after her, tend her, but never marry her. He never loved her, though he did her a monstrous injury. Rose is the martyr of the play. She has sinned, she has suffered horribly, but she dies with the love for Walter on her lips, a better fate than any marriage with a man who did not profess to love her. Though for all that in the supreme hour of danger this man did not hesitate to do his duty when he is summoned to lead a forlorn hope, and goes to almost certain death. "The woman I cannot love I must die to save; the woman I love best on earth I must leave behind to die!" He devotes his life to Rose Reade. He can do no more. But fate steps in, and saves his life, giving the martyr's crown to poor Rose Reade—the bitterly injured woman of the story. Why, then, should poor Sister Mary be killed in order that "poetical justice" may be done? Her death would not give Rose Reade one hour's happiness, for Walter Leigh could never love her. The unanswered love dies with Rose; the love fulfilled is presumed to flourish in the heart of a repentant man, and under the guidance of the purest and sweetest of women. Is this not then "poetical justice," and how is morality outraged by such a position?

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Miss Millward, whose photograph appears in the present number, has had a career of unbroken prosperity since she adopted the stage as a professional actress four and a-half years ago. Her first experience as an amateur was obtained as leading lady of the Carlton Dramatic Club, and she speedily became very well known in amateur circles. Her professional *début* took place at a *matinée* at Toole's Theatre in July, 1881. At this trial performance she attracted the favourable notice of Mrs. Kendal, and two days afterwards she was engaged for the St. James's Theatre. There she played Mrs. Mildmay, in "Still Waters Run Deep;" Mabel Maryon, in "Coralie;" and her first original part of Mary Preston in

Clement Scott's one-act drama, "The Cape Mail." Next we find her with Miss Geneviève Ward, playing Alice Verney in "Forget-Me-Not," in which she achieved a great success. Shortly afterwards, Mr. Henry Irving engaged her for the Lyceum, and she appeared there as Hero in the revival of "Much Ado About Nothing." Every playgoer in England and America knows how well she played the part. Miss Millward then accompanied Mr. Irving and his company through their first American tour, and then added the parts of Jessica in "The Merchant of Venice;" Lady Touchwood in "The Belle's Strategem;" Anette in "The Bells;" Anne in "Richard III.;" and Marie in "Louis XI.," to her *répertoire*. During her sojourn in America, Miss Millward became a great favourite, and after completing her two years' engagement with Mr. Irving she recrossed the Atlantic to assume the position of leading lady at the Madison Square Theatre, New York. There she played Pauline in the first American version of "Called Back," and created the part of Katharine Ray in the very successful native-born play of "Sealed Instructions." After a very prosperous tour through the States, winning golden opinions everywhere, Miss Millward returned to London in July last, and was immediately engaged by Messrs. Gatti for the Adelphi. There she appeared in "Arrah-na-Pogue" and "The Colleen Bawn;" and on December 23 she took her position as leading lady, and made a great hit as Dora Vane in "The Harbour Lights."

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Mr. A. E. T. Watson, whose portrait appears this month, drifted, as he tells us, into literature while waiting nomination and reading leisurely for the Civil Service. His earliest efforts were a number of stories for "London Society," one of which was illustrated by the late Randolph Caldecott, and to the same magazine he contributed also papers on "Popular Actors and Actresses" and "Dramatists," while writing verse for "Belgravia" and "Temple Bar." Mr. Watson was advised by the late George Honey to gain a practical acquaintanceship with the stage, and accordingly having studied music, appeared with an English opera company in small parts first at Reading and then at the Standard Theatre in London, playing also in farce. Mr. Watson's first introduction to journalism was under the auspices of Mr. Savile Clarke, for whom, in the "Court Circular," he wrote notes and other articles. In 1873 he was introduced to the late Mr. Johnstone, of "The Standard," and, commencing with writing leaderettes in the evening paper, he afterwards became dramatic and chief musical critic—a dual post he holds to this day. Mr. Watson is also editor of "The Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News," to which he contributes a column of notes signed "Rapier," and in which appeared his "Sketches in the Hunting Field," "Types of the Turf," and "Racecourse and Covert Side." In conjunction with the Duke of Beaufort, Mr. Watson is conductor of "The Badminton Library,"





" Blame where you must, be candid where you can,  
And be each critic the good-natured man."

GOLDSMITH.

*Apparatus at my*  
*Apparatus at my*

and he has also brought out a very useful "Sportsman's Year-Book." His contributions to the stage have been two operettas—"The Elfin Tree," played by the Carl Rosa company; "A Pair of Them," produced at the Gaiety; and a three-act drama, "Pendarvon," written in conjunction with Mr. Savile Clarke, and brought out at the Alexandra Theatre, Liverpool. When we add that Mr. Watson is an occasional contributor to "Punch," "The Saturday Review," and many magazines, it will be evident that there is no more hard-working journalist than the subject of this sketch, certainly no more temperate critic or genial companion. Gifted with an even, well-balanced, and undemonstrative temperament, Mr. Watson has made many sincere friends, and, luckily, avoided the offence that creates enemies.

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George R. Sims, ever popular for his geniality and his excellent work, has suddenly become the leading topic of conversation in American society. It is very well known that with all popular reciters the author of "Ballads of Babylon" is well to the front. The last popular song, the newest pianoforte piece, the most recent eccentricity on the fiddle or the banjo, are as nothing to a poem by G. R. S. Dagonet. One of the most popular of this author's poems for recitation is "Ostler Joe." It might be recited in a seminary for young ladies. It would be hallowed wherever virtue most does congregate. It would not paint a blush on the cheeks of the most intellectual matron. It is patronised by purists, petted by parsons, for has not Mrs. Kendal given her *imprimatur* to "Ostler Joe" and the poem in public. An American lady, as liberal in her views as Mrs. Kendal, but possibly not so clever, recited "Ostler Joe" the other day in a *salon*, whereupon the fluttered doves shook their virtuous feathers with indignation, and walked out. The story of poor Joe, who took back to his heart the sad but repentant woman who had injured him, was too much for their nice minds. The story of the insult to Ostler Joe soon spread. It got into the papers. There was a fierce demand for a copy of the poem. Booksellers' stores were ransacked. The story of Ostler Joe was quoted in a hundred American papers. Sims and sanctity became the watchwords of American society; and now Dagonet is the widest read English poet in all America. Out of evil good comes. The prudery of a few silly American women has immortalised the clever author of "Ostler Joe." Cannot anyone discover a hidden meaning in "The Women of Mumbles Head," or detect deplorable taste in "The Pride of the Troop"? I wish they would. If so, they might share the happy fate of "Last Night," a song made popular by the expressive singing of the gifted composer of the music, and the sudden gust of prudery blown into drawing-rooms by the "frisky matron."

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The statement deliberately made in the New York "Spirit of the Times" that "Jack-in-the-Box" depended for its success in this country on

an imitation of Henry Irving by "a male dancer dressed up in woman's clothes" is gratuitously and absurdly untrue. In "Jack-in-the-Box," as written for Miss Fannie Leslie and as produced in this country, there is no suggestion in the faintest degree of any imitation of Mr. Irving. There is no male dancer dressed up in woman's clothes from one end of the play to the other. There is a fair scene, which has probably been used in America as a chance for introducing idiotic buffoonery; but it is a little hard that a paper with the character of the "Spirit of the Times" should go out of its way to make an accusation of *mala fides* against "Mr. Irving's friends" which is absolutely unjustifiable, and has no scintilla of proof to support it.

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"When in difficulty put up old comedy" is a managerial axiom that is too often acted upon with disastrous results; and we are afraid that the managers of the Haymarket will hardly find in the revival of "She Stoops to Conquer" that turn of the adverse tide which we would be so glad to see. They have a clever company, but it is set to do precisely what, with all the goodwill in the world, it is unable to accomplish. Mrs. Bernard-Beere, a capable actress in drama, brings her deep contralto voice, commanding presence and tragic manner to the presentation of bright Kate Hardcastle, and, of course, fails; while Miss Neville, as personated by Miss Alleyn, was absolutely colourless. Young Mr. Farren again makes Old Hardcastle a cross-grained curmudgeon instead of a hearty English squire; while Mr. Barrymore, though he is the best of the party, is far too intense as Young Marlow. Tony Lumpkin, again, as shown by Mr. Brookfield, is eccentric enough in all conscience, but, unfortunately, he is not humorous; while Mr. Maurice is very wooden as Hastings. Mrs. Chippendale as Mrs. Hardcastle played vigorously, and with the skill born of long experience; while Mr. Somerset may be commended as Diggory. The bright comedy, under these circumstances, seemed like champagne that had been standing open all night, and had lost its sparkle, and the entertainment produced depression rather than exhilaration. The failure that has attended the sudden revival of Goldsmith's famous comedy on the boards of the Haymarket Theatre will not have been without result if it teaches the stars of the modern stage on what slender foundations their fame, such as it is, rests, and how essential it is that they should study before they attempt to soar. A provincial stock company a few years ago would have been ashamed to give such a performance, but in London we see the worst as well as the best acting.

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At the Empire Theatre, one of the most elegantly designed and sumptuous theatres in London, has been revived the brilliant spectacle, "Round the World in Eighty Days," which has been reshaped and manipulated generally to fit the special character of the house. But it would be a task of difficulty to devise "a show" that would exactly suit

the theatre, as there is something illogical in the disposition of *foyer*, open promenades, &c., which seems to exclude what is addressed to the ear. A theatre with these adjuncts is self-contradictory. M. de Chastelain appears to be a genuine French manager, who finds himself, like M. Mayer, "catering" for a London public. His ballets are ambitious, and even magnificent, but the "dialect" and the mode of addressing it to the audience seems out of keeping, and suggests the sort of verbal exposition that accompanies a diorama. The "critical situations," with which it is contrived each act should wind up, are poor to a degree, notably the scene of the rescue. Miss Kate Vaughan plays the heroine, and curiously displays deficiencies of a marked order. The part is a wretched one, but it would be quite possible to impart a sort of "distinction" to it. Her true expression, however, is not in "the vocal chords," but in that exquisite grace of movement which, in Consul Planeus' day, used to ravish all. Marius has nothing to do, but contrives to impart a factitious bustle as though he were doing something—an art in itself. The scenery is poetical and original. The night of our visit a luckless snake charmer who was winding the unpleasant creatures about her person, received an ugly bite, and the audience had the rare chance of seeing how a serpent "strikes" its victim. It was a very painful and disagreeable incident.

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A most interesting little collection of Holman Hunt's works, exhibited since the latter part of March at the Fine Art Society's Rooms, New Bond Street, essentially requires—in order to form a proper estimation of its many especial merits—that keen and ready appreciation of the beautiful on the spectator's part which is, alas! but too often crushed, if not altogether annihilated, by a prevailing spirit of common-place realism which frequently overclouds the poetic fancies of many artists whose names are as household words amongst us. "Chacun à son goût." To the eyes and senses of a large majority of the sight-seeing public immense satisfaction is undoubtedly afforded by gazing upon life-size portraits of baby-children, beaming with the smiles, or overwhelmed with the momentarily-hopeless sorrows of infantile years. Nevertheless, there exist, on the other hand, others who ask that the painter's brush, whilst revealing countless beauties of light, form, and colour, may also use well and nobly its frequently unrecognised, but no less indisputed, power of bringing the spectator's mind into closest sympathy with all that is most purely beautiful in life and nature. Such, happily to relate, appears the principal "mission" of Mr. Holman Hunt's work, displayed, however, under so many differing forms and aspects that it becomes truly difficult to particularise the merits of one study without naming others demanding an equal share of our heartiest praise and admiration.

Needless to say how that well-known picture, "The Light of the World," claims with same attraction as in years gone by our especial

attention, as we look and look again at this most exquisite embodiment of the Saviour—knocking at the door of the human soul—waiting with divine patience for the complete surrender of the wanderer's heart when acknowledging Him as its sole Lord and rightful owner. The blue-grey background, thrown into dim shadow by the soft gleam of the lamp's light, which clothes with radiance of purest white the full-length figure of Christ clad in richly-jewelled robe, no less strikingly harmonises with the religious thoughts conveyed to our minds by this exquisitely ideal work than does the reddish tone which wholly envelops the equally well-known study, entitled “The Shadow of Death.” Very beautiful, though widely different in expression and cast of feature, is the Christ's face, illuminated by the sun's declining rays, which severally irradiates with almost bewildering brilliancy the flooring of the humble carpenter's shop, strewn with wood-shavings and instruments of simple toil, the rich brocades and precious offerings of the Magi, o'er which the Virgin Mother is attentively bending; whilst in the far distance it encircles with fainter degree of glory the sloping hills and plains of the lowly village of Nazareth.

Turning for an instant from religious to secular realms of thought, let us note the same wealth of colour as displayed in the study of “Claudio and Isabella,” where in the damp, lonely prison the reproachful sister awakes her brother's cowardly spirit to a realisation of the beauty of death as compared to a life entangled by the hateful fetters of earthly sin and shame. What a fascinating example of womanly virtue is here given us in the person of Isabella, as, clad in queen-like garments of greyish white, with calm, gentle eyes bearing a world of meaning in their steadfast gaze, she confronts the consciousness-stricken youth, the warm colouring of whose dress is not less beautifully depicted than is the pale, pinkish tinge of the apple blossoms peeping between the iron bars of the narrow prison window. Still more forcibly, in the work entitled “Strayed Sheep,” do we note the especial love of sunshine which so largely characterises many of Holman Hunt's studies, the dazzling brightness of earth, sky, and sea almost inclining us to quarrel at such an over-abundance of colour, until we gradually note the rare genius which blends such apparently conflicting tones into sure and perfect harmony one with another. Want of space alone prevents us dwelling upon other works deserving equal attention with those we have feebly attempted to describe. All lovers of art should hasten to visit this collection, which, we venture to predict, will prove one of the most attractive exhibitions of the present London season.

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The elocution class of the Birkbeck Literary and Scientific Institution gave their annual performance at St. George's Hall on February 25. Why amateurs should revive “The Shaughraun” is not quite comprehensible, and of what gain its performance can be to an elocution class

we fail to see. The acting, however, was very good in some cases, but not in all, unfortunately. Mr. J. H. George was very weak as Captain Molyneux, and Mr. Ernest Fisher very bad as Father Dolan, being stagey and indistinct in his enunciation. Mr. Edwin Fergusson was earnest as Robert Ffoliot, but it was somewhat novel to see a recently-escaped convict with long curly hair. Mr. W. E. George was fair as Harvey Duff. Mr. P. Gromer showed himself to be an excellent actor in a part which gives little scope for histrionic display, that of Corry Kinchela. Mr. Alexander Watson's conception of the Shaughraun was the correct one, and he acted very well, but, for this particular part, he lacked a natural gift, which is almost impossible to assume, irrepressible spirits ; he took the part at a canter, when he ought to have been tearing at a full gallop. Miss Annie Roby was awkward and amateurish as Arte O'Neale. Miss Emily Grove (Mrs. Grove Palmer) was a bright and spirited Claire Ffoliot, and Mrs. Robert Curtis did fairly well as Mrs. O'Kelly, only there was nothing Irish about her old woman. Miss Edith Hamilton was as fascinating a little rogue as one could wish to see for Moya. This bright young actress was of great help to the performance.

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At the Royal Park Hall (Park Street, Camden Town), on March 20, Mr. Edward Coventry gave a musical and dramatic entertainment. He was well supported, and appeared himself in the three-fold character of comic singer, reciter, and actor. Mr. Avalon Collard's glee singers opened the concert, and sang several part songs, but I cannot say much for their performance. Miss Edith Maas, who sang two songs, has a very pleasant contralto voice, but a little more spirit would improve her style. Mr. Joseph Lynde was heard to great advantage in two of Tosti's songs, which were well suited to his fine baritone voice ; later on, "Father O'Flynn," given with much point, gained him an encore. Mr. Frank Syme, a clever young mimic, gave Corney Grain's "My First Cigar" in rather too loud and boisterous a manner, but he pleased the audience and was encored ; he then sang "On the Steamer," a parody of "In the Gloaming," and this was very good. In the second part Mr. Frank Syme gave Grossmith's musical sketch, "A Juvenile Party," and except in the uncle's sneezing song did very well indeed. Mr. Syme is decidedly clever, but wants toning down a little ; however, as he is very young, this will no doubt come of itself. Mr. Edward Coventry is also a very young man ; he is very promising. First he sang "'Twas only a year ago," a parody on "It came with the merry May, love," taken from Mr. Arthur Roberts' repertory. This having to be sung without any jesture, the comic rendering entirely depends on the play of features ; in this, Mr. Edward Coventry was very successful, and he was encored twice. In the recital of G. R. Sims's "Christmas Day in a Workhouse," in character, Mr. Coventry showed throughout a decided talent for "making up." At first he was rather nervous, and hurried over his lines, but this soon passed off. He showed both earnestness and feeling, and his conception of the piece

was good. One bit of friendly advice I must give to him ; that is, not to speak so low ; a weak voice may be appropriate to the character of an old man, but I doubt if Mr. Coventry could be heard at first by those at the farthest end of the hall. As he proceeded, he allowed his voice to gain more volume, and was far more effective in consequence. The entertainment closed with the farce, "Brown the Martyr," Mr. Edward Coventry as the artist, and Miss Hammerton as Mrs. Brown, being both good and natural. Of Mr. Chapman's Brown the least said the better. Miss Ada Johns proved herself a good accompanist to Mr. Coventry's song ; Mr. George Jenkins held the piano the rest of the time. Mr. Coventry has still something to learn, but he is on the right road, and study and experience will undoubtedly bring him success.

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After a wonderfully successful concert tour of seven weeks in the English provinces, Scotland, and Ireland, Madame Trebelli is now singing opera in Switzerland and Germany. She is engaged principally for the parts of Azucena, Amneris, and Carmen, and is to appear in various towns, returning to London at the end of April. After the London season Madame Trebelli goes to America for an extensive tour in the United States. The famous contralto was greeted enthusiastically by our American cousins on the occasion of her first visit, and they are preparing to welcome her again as heartily as before.

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The Irving Dramatic Club's last performance on February 18th at St. George's Hall was given on behalf of St. Michael's Mission, H. Byron's "Married in Haste" being the play selected. As a whole, the performance dragged, and was not up to the Club's usually high standard ; two of the performers, Mr. T. R. Whinney and Mr. F. W. Rawson showing painful exaggeration. Even Mr. H. D. Shepard did not quite escape the influence of his surroundings, for, although he made a very good Gibson Green, he was at times wanting in spirit, and rather too deliberate. To Mr. B. Webster and Miss L. Webster I must give hearty congratulations on the rapid strides they are making in the art of acting. As the hero and heroine they were both excellent throughout, but for a slight uncertainty in his lines on the part of the gentleman. In the third act, which requires the best acting, they showed much feeling and dramatic power.

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New plays produced, and important revivals, in London, the provinces, and Paris, from February 22 to March 25, 1886:—

(Revivals are marked thus \*.)

#### LONDON:

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|-------|-----|---|
| March | 3   | "Round the World," a new version, by Alfred Murray, of Jules Verne and d'Ennery's "Round the World in Eighty Days." Empire Theatre.   |
| "     | 8   | "The Foreman of the Works," an original domestic drama, in four acts, by Geo. Manville Fenn. Standard Theatre.  |
| "     | 11  | "Doo, Brown and Co.," an original farce, in three acts, by C M. Rae. Vaudeville Theatre.  |
| "     | 13* | "She Stoops to Conquer," Goldsmith's comedy. Haymarket Theatre.   |
| "     | 15  | "Love and Stratagem," a new and original play, in three acts, by Oswald Brand and E. W. Linging. Gaiety Theatre. (Matinée—single performance.)  |
| "     | 17  | "Atlantis; or, The Lost Land," a new and original comic opera, in three acts, by Maurice Dalton and Ernest Genet ; music by T. M. Haddow. Gaiety Theatre. (Matinée—single performance.) |
| "     | 22  | "Our Silver Wedding," sensational drama, in five acts, by James Willing. Standard Theatre.  |
| "     | 23  | "Masse-en-Yell-Oh," a riotous socialistic tawestie, by Harry Paulton and "Mostyn Tedde;" music by Jakobowski. Comedy Theatre.   |
| "     | 25  | "Jim, the Penman," drama, by Sir Charles L. Young, Bart. Haymarket Theatre. (Matinée—single performance.)   |
| "     | "   | "Oliver Grumble," burlesque, in two acts, by George Dance. Novelty Theatre. (First produced at the Prince of Wales Theatre, Liverpool, on March 15, 1886.)                              |

#### PROVINCES:

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|-------------|----|---|
| February 22 |    | "Larks," an original farcical comedy, by J. Wilton Jones. Pavilion Theatre, Southport.  |
| "           | "  | "The Missing Link," drama, in four acts, by Hal Collier. Theatre Royal, Workington.   |
| "           | 26 | "Love and the Law," new and original operetta, words by Henry Millward ; music by C. Flavell Hayward. Exchange Hall, Wolverhampton.           |
| March       | 3  | "A Merrie Familie," original comedy-drama, in three acts, by W. F. Field. Theatre of Varieties, Brentford.                                    |
| "           | 8  | "Sister Mary," a new play, in four acts, by Wilson Barrett and Clement Scott. Theatre Royal, Brighton.  |
| "           | "  | "Touch and Go," burlesque, by Walter Andrews. Prince of Wales Theatre, Liverpool.   |
| "           | 11 | "Nadel," a new and original blank-verse drama, by W. F. Lyon. Theatre Royal, Coventry.  |
| "           | 15 | "Oliver Grumble," burlesque, in two acts, by George Dance. Prince of Wales Theatre, Liverpool. (Produced at the Novelty Theatre on March 25.) |

## PARIS:

- February 23 "Le Fiacre 117," comedy-vaudeville, in three acts, by Emile de Najac and Albert Millaud. Variétés.  
 ,, 24 "Roger le Mécanicien," drama, in five acts and six tableaux, by René de Cuers and Adolphe Lightone. Bouffes-du-Nord.  
 ,, 25\* "Le Roman d'un Jeune Homme Pauvre," drama, in five acts by Octave Feuillet. Gymnase.  
 ,, , "Lohengrin à l'Alcazar," parody, in three tableaux, by Le Bourg and Boucherat; music by Patusset. Alcazar.  
 ,, 26 "Le Chant de la Cloche," a dramatic legend, music and words by Vincent d'Indy. Concert Lamoureux.  
 ,, , "1802," dialogue in prose, for Victor Hugo's anniversary, by Ernest Renan. Comédie Française.  
 ,, , "1802, à propos," in verse, for Victor Hugo's anniversary, by Mdme. Simone Arnaud. Odéon.  
 ,, 27 "Hamlet," in five acts and eleven tableaux, adaptation in verse, by Charles Samson and Lucien Cressonnois. Porte St. Martin.
- March 1 "David Teniers," comedy, in one act, in verse, by Edouard Noel and Lucien Pâté.  
 ,, ,\* "Le Beau Léandre," in one act, in verse, by Théodore de Banville and Siraudin. Odéon.  
 ,, 3\* "Les Contes d'Hoffmann," comic opera, by Offenbach. Opéra Comique.  
 ,, , "Bigame," comedy-vaudeville, in three acts, by Paul Bilhaud and Albert Barré. Palais Royal.  
 ,, 4 "Martyre," drama, in five acts, by Adolphe d'Ennery and Edmond Tarbé. Ambigu.  
 ,, 6 The Hippodrome re-opened for the summer season.  
 ,, 11\* "Fromont Jeune et Risler Aîné," drama, in five acts, by Alphonse Daudet and Adolphe Belot. Gymnase.  
 ,, 12 "Coup Double," comedy, in one act, by Edouard Noel. Déjazet.  
 ,, , "Les Maris inquiets," comedy-bouffe, in three acts, by Albin Valabrégue. Déjazet.  
 ,, 13\* "L'Ecole des Femmes," comedy, in verse, in five acts, by Molière. Comédie Française.  
 ,, 17 "Ane à Pierrot," pantomime. Eden.  
 ,, 20 "Joséphine Vendue par ses Sœurs," an opera-bouffe, in three acts, by MM. Paul Ferrier and Fabrice Carré; music by M. Victor Roger. Bouffes-Parisiens.



# THE THEATRE.

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## How Balzac's “Marâtre” came to be Written.

BY PHILIP KENT.

### PART I.

ONE fine afternoon, in the summer of 1847, a visitor rang the door-bell of one of the two pavilions which the celebrated Doctor Ségalas had built at Bougival, on the banks of the Seine. The door was opened by a maid-servant.

“Is the manager of the Théâtre-Historique at home?” inquired the visitor.

“I will go and tell master that you wish to see him, if you will be good enough to wait here under the arbour”—for such was the somewhat pretentious title that the owner of the dwelling had bestowed upon a few straggling sprays of ivy which interlaced each other over the entrance porch.

I—the owner in question—was lolling on the green slope of the towing-path, sheltered by the shadow of the house from the rays of the broiling sun, when the servant announced a visitor.

“A visitor!” I exclaimed. “What an odd idea, to come at a time of day when it is so overpoweringly hot! Did the gentleman give you his name?”

“I didn’t think to ask it, sir,” replied the servant.

“What sort of a man is he?”

“Why, goodness me, I hardly looked at him! He’s got a straw hat on, and his shoes are covered with dust; and he’s got a stick in his hand a-flicking away at the ivy leaves.”

“Confound it all! there are none too many as it is,” said I, already somewhat out of temper at being disturbed.

However, I quitted the friendly shade, and made my way to the  
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front-door. My visitor had his back turned to me, and was looking through the garden gate. Standing in this position, he looked for all the world like a country tradesman. But, as I approached, he faced round, and lo ! I at once recognised M. de Balzac—the great Balzac himself ! I had often seen, but never spoken to him.

I offered a hundred confused apologies for having kept him waiting, and begged him to do me the honour of entering my little drawing-room.

"No ; we should stifle there," replied he, good-humouredly. "Might I take the liberty of asking whether you were not in some more airy spot when I rang your bell?"

"In truth, Monsieur de Balzac, I don't hesitate to confess that I was e'en just squatting on the bank of the towing-path, in the shade, close to the river, where the grass is so beautifully green that it makes my poor lawn look even browner than it really is."

"Well, then, that's the place where, subject to your good pleasure, I propose to have a bit of a chat with you. So lead the way," said Balzac, smiling.

When he had settled himself in a comfortable position on the sloping turf, he began to explain to me that he had for a long time past been thinking of writing for our theatre a grand historical drama, of which, as I should very soon see, he had all the material elements ; but that he had been hitherto deterred from setting to work by the fear of meeting with some opposition from Alexandre Dumas ; that quite recently, however, he had learnt that behind the great author there stood a responsible manager ; that I was that responsible manager ; and that, finding we were neighbours—for at this time Balzac had a country house at Marly-le-Roi—he had made up his mind to take Bougival on his way, some day as he was passing, and frankly ask me to tell him "how the land lay."

"You need not be in the least afraid," I replied. "Our literary pastor and master will be enthusiastically delighted at the idea of seeing so considerable an author as M. de Balzac contributing his share to the glory and success of our theatre."

By way of fortifying this assertion, I instanced the case of Adolphus Dumas, to whose "Ecole des Familles" the *other* Dumas had accorded a brotherly reception ; the case of Joseph Autran, the literary father of "La Fille d'Eschylle," and also the case of

Paul Meuice, who had supplied us with a fine poetical version of "Hamlet."

"Well and good, then!" said Balzac. "You have completely reassured me; and I can now speak to you freely about my historical drama. It is to be called "Pierre et Cathérine." Peter the First and Catharine of Russia! That strikes me as being an excellent subject for a piece."

"In *your* hands, Monsieur de Balzac, the subject cannot but be excellent. Are you well on with it? Have you worked out a detailed plan of it?"

"It's all of it here," said Balzac, striking his forehead. "There's nothing to do but to put it on paper. Why, look you, the first scene might be rehearsed the day after to-morrow."

"I should dearly like to know what this first scene may be," said I, in my most seductive manner.

"Nothing more easy! We are in a Russian tavern. The decorations lie before you. Good! The tavern is all astir with life and bustle, because the road is thronged with passing troops. Folks are coming in and folks are going out—drinking, chattering; but everyone is in a hurry. Among the servants of the inn there is a young woman full of life and activity. Now, mark this woman well! She is well-built, and, though by no means a beauty, is exceptionally *piquante*; the men 'chaff' her as she trots to and fro, and she has a smile for every one. Only, nobody must go too far, either in word or deed. To an over-free speech, or an over-bold caress, she replies with a slap in the face as bad as a blow of the fist.

"Enter a soldier, more important-looking than the others, charged with some particular and pressing piece of business. Of course he takes his time about it. So he will leisurely drink his fill, and have a long chat with the waitress, if she takes his fancy. And, as a matter of fact, this servant does take his fancy at first sight. As for her, she looks upon the soldier as a smart fellow in his way.

"'My lass,' quoth he, putting his arm round her waist, 'you suit me to a T; sit yourself down there, near me, at this table, and let's have a drink together.' And down sits the soldier with the servant by his side.

"Perceiving, however, that the old innkeeper disapproves of this proceeding, the soldier jumps up in a fury, and, bringing his

hand down upon the rude deal table with a tremendous bang, shouts out : ‘ If I’m not allowed to have my own way, I’ll set fire to the whole barrack.’ And no doubt he would have been as good as his word. Nevertheless, he was an honest soldier, but terrible to his inferiors.

“ Thereupon the old landlord makes a sign to the girl that she is to do as the soldier wishes. What else could you expect ? When the troops are let loose to scour the country, the poor peasant has a hard time of it.

“ Meanwhile the soldier had resumed his seat. One of his arms affectionately encircled the servant’s neck, except when from time to time he removed it in order to raise his glass to his lips, his other hand being occupied in holding the pipe which he was smoking. When he had drunk ‘ potations pottle deep,’ he turned to the girl, with passion in his eyes, and said—

“ ‘ Never you fear, I’ll find you a far better “ diggings ” than this.’

“ While they are talking together, without a thought of what is going on around them, the main door opens, and in comes an officer. At sight of him everyone respectfully rises to his feet. The other soldiers give the military salute and stand stock-still. Only the servant and her admirer retain their seats. They have neither of them seen or heard the officer. Observing this, the man in authority takes offence ; the girl attracts his attention ; he keeps his eyes fixed upon her as he marches towards the table. When he reaches the soldier’s side, the officer raises his arm, and brings it down upon the poor fellow’s shoulder with a terrific force, which nearly bends him double.

“ ‘ Get up, you rascal,’ cries the officer. ‘ Go and write down your name, the name of your regiment, and your number at the bar of the inn ; and you may look to hear from me before long.’

“ At the first moment—that is to say, on receiving the blow, without knowing who dealt it—the private had felt disposed to retaliate ; but when he recognised the aggressor as his superior officer, this natural instinct yielded to the habit of discipline. So, rising automatically, he went and did as he was bid. Meantime the officer scans the servant with redoubled attention ; and the scrutiny seems to calm and mollify him. The soldier, having written down his name, &c., returns and humbly tenders the paper to the officer. ‘ Good !’ exclaims the latter, handing it back to him. ‘ Now be off with you !’

"The soldier again salutes, turns upon his heels in regulation form, and makes off, without looking at anyone—not even at the attractive servant.

"At her the officer smiles, and she smiles back at the officer. 'A fine man!' thinks she to herself.

"The 'fine man' takes the seat which the soldier had vacated, orders the best cheer that the inn can furnish, and invites the servant to share it with him. She accepts, without a moment's hesitation.

"Then they begin to talk to each other, and their conversation soon becomes extremely confidential.

"A stranger suddenly presents himself at the door of the inn; he is wrapped in a long cloak.

"On catching sight of this personage, men and women all sink to their knees; some even stoop until their foreheads touch the floor.

"The officer, however, is as blind as his predecessor, the private, was to what is going on behind his back. The seductive inn servant has already half-bewitched him. In a fit of enthusiasm the officer exclaims—'You are perfectly divine. I shall take you away with me. You shall have a grand set of rooms, in which you'll never feel the cold.'

"But the man in the cloak has his eyes fixed upon the pair who have taken no notice of his entrance. He feels drawn towards the frolicsome girl by an irresistible attraction and sympathy. He approaches the table, and flinging his cloak back from his shoulders, stands with his arms folded upon his chest. The officer sees him, turns pale, springs to his feet, and bowing almost to the very ground, stammers out—'Oh! Sire, forgive me!'

"Stand up.'

"Just as the soldier had done to him, so now does the officer, in his turn, raise himself bolt upright in a moment, and awaits the good pleasure of his master. The master, meanwhile, was taking a good look at the girl, and the girl, on her part, was admiringly, but fearlessly, surveying the all-powerful Tsar.

"'You can withdraw,' said the latter to the officer. 'I shall keep this woman for myself, and give her a palace.'

"Such was the first meeting of Peter the First and her who was destined to become Catherine of Russia."

"Well, and what think you of my prologue?" asked Balzac.

"Most curious, most original; but the rest?"

"You shall have it shortly. The situation is interesting; you'll see! As a frame-work for the historical events, I have in my head an entirely new *mise-en-scène*. For all our theatres, and especially for yours, Russia is a mine of wealth that only needs working. And it will be worked. At present, from the standing-point of the decorative and plastic arts, we have got no further, in all that concerns this rich and grandiose country, than the coloured prints representing the passage of the Beresina, and the death of Poniatowski, with his big devil of a horse, which looks as if it were minded to swallow the ice-blocks."

Then warming with his own eloquence, he exclaimed—"And the inhabitants? Hearts of gold; infinitely superior to us Frenchmen! As for the Russian peasants, it is only among them that genuine tenors are to be found nowadays. Compared with them our countryfolk are no better than so many hoarse Prudhommes. And then the Russian upper classes! They are simply adorable. Furthermore, it is from among them that I have picked out and won my future wife!"

Thereupon Balzac went away, leaving me enchanted with him, and building mountains of hope on the forthcoming inevitable success of "*Pierre et Cathérine*."

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## PART II.

When I next saw him, all was changed. He had for the present abandoned the Russian play. He still promised to let us have it later on; but in the meantime "cool reflection" had shown him that it was a colossal undertaking, not a single detail of which ought to be "scamped." Now he needed information on innumerable points with regard to certain Russian ceremonies and customs; and these he purposed studying on the spot in the course of a tour to St. Petersburg and Moscow, which he contemplated making during the coming winter. In short, he begged me not to press him upon the subject, and offered to furnish me, when spring came round, with a drama in lieu of that which he felt bound to hold back.

Notwithstanding my disappointment, I could not choose but yield to M. de Balzac's wishes, and, in sheer despair, I entreated

him to furnish me, if possible, with some faint inkling of the new subject which he meant to work up for us.

"It will be an atrocious affair," replied Balzac, with the self-satisfied air of a man who has carried his point.

"How, atrocious?"

"Don't misunderstand me; I'm not thinking of some coarse melodrama, in which the traitor of the piece sets fire to houses wholesale, and poniards the inmates *ad libitum*. No; the play which I am hatching is a drawing-room drama, in which calmness, tranquillity, and politeness are the order of the day. The men are quietly seated at the whist-table, playing a rubber by the light of wax candles, crowned with small green shades. The women are laughing and chattering over their embroidery. The family tea is on the table. In short, for aught that meets the eye, the most perfect harmony and goodwill remain undisturbed. Yet, beneath this smooth, untroubled surface, the passions are at work; slowly, and in silence and secrecy, the drama proceeds; till at length, like the flame of a conflagration which has long been smouldering, it leaps to light, and sweeps everything before it in its destructive fury. That's the sort of thing I have in mind."

"Master, you are in your own element. So, then, the groundwork of your play is ready laid?"

"Most assuredly. It is to the author's standing collaborator—Chance—that I owe the materials I know a certain family, which I will not name, consisting of three members—first, the husband; secondly, his daughter by a former marriage; thirdly, her step-mother, who is still young, and without children of her own. The two women worship one another. The tender devotion of one, the pretty caresses and endearments of the other, call forth the admiration of all their acquaintances. Yes, and I myself also found it all very charming—at first. But, after awhile, I began to wonder, not that step-daughter and step-mother should be fond of each other—there is nothing positively unnatural in that—but that they should be so excessively fond. It is possible to have too much even of a good thing. Well, do what I would, I could not keep myself from watching their behaviour to each other, and sundry trivial incidents tended to confirm my original impression. It was only a few evenings ago that a more important incident occurred to convince me that I had not jumped to a rash conclusion.

"On presenting myself in the drawing-room, at a time when

almost everyone else had gone away, I saw the step-daughter quit the apartment without being aware of my presence. As she went, she looked at her step-mother; and—heavens!—what a look it was! It was like the stab of a stiletto. At that moment the step-mother was putting out the candles on the whist-table. Having done this, she turned towards her step-daughter; their eyes met, and the lips of both the women simultaneously wreathed themselves into the most gracious of smiles. Directly, however, the door closed upon the girl, the expression of the elder woman's face suddenly changed, and was succeeded by a malignant scowl.

"All this, as you may well suppose, passed as quick as lightning; but it lasted long enough for me. 'Here,' said I to myself, 'are two creatures who hate each other right cordially.' What had occurred I know not, and I never wish to know; but with this for a starting-point, an entire drama unfolded itself before my mental vision."

"And on the 'first night' you mean to give these two ladies a good box, in order that they may profit by the lesson designedly addressed to them in the piece?" I remarked.

"Assuredly I shall offer them the box to which you refer; and since you have mentioned the subject, I must ask you to keep me an extra one for the purpose; but, as for giving anyone lessons, I never dreamed of such a thing. Highly presumptuous would be the novelist or dramatist who should write with that intention! He influences his readers, or his audience, as the case may be, without any definite, pre-conceived aim; and he, in his turn, is subject to the influence of his epoch, without understanding how or why—instinct and chance!"

"But to return to these ladies. That they are playing the comedy of mutual affection is clear to me beyond a doubt; but matters may remain as they are between them, without terminating in any catastrophe, however trifling. All I say is, that they have supplied me with the basis of a plot. My terrible superstructure is purely and simply the work of my imagination, and will never, I would fain hope and believe, find its counterpart in the actual future of these two ladies. In any case, if their disunion should involve—which God forbid!--the seeds of a tragical *dénouement*, it might well be that my play would prevent those seeds from germinating."

Several months elapsed. The journey to Russia took place. I was among the first to hear of M. de Balzac's return; and I hastened to call upon him at his house in the Avenue Fortunée.\* The door at which I knocked was the last upon the right-hand side, as you approach from the Champs Elysées. There was nothing imposing in the aspect of the entrance to the house, which was furnished with a small grated window, that was quickly opened in answer to my ring by a man-servant in a red jacket, who asked me my name and quality, then disappeared, but only to reappear a moment later and lead the way, through a small garden with narrow macadamised paths, to the door of the house itself. On entering the somewhat low-ceiled saloon into which my guide conducted me, the first object that attracted my attention was David D'Anzers's noble statue, in white marble, of the master of the house.

Balzac himself was at the further end of the apartment. When I had gazed my fill at the bust, he called out to me, "Here is your manuscript." Then, and not till then, did I catch sight of the author. Clad in his flowing, monastic robe of white wool, he was standing at a writing-table, with his hand resting on a packet of light grey paper. Yet no nugget that ever gladdened the eyes of the gold-digger with its yellow gleam could possibly look brighter to his eyes than that pile of sober-tinted paper did to mine.

I pressed forward. On the outer page of the MS. Balzac had written with his own hand, in large characters, the words—

"GERTRUDE, Tragédie Bourgeoise, en cinq actes, en prose."

On the other side was the projected "cast" of the piece. Mélingue was to act the part of Ferdinand, the lover of the step-mother and of her daughter. The part of Gertrude was allotted to Mme. Dorval. The other *rôles* were assigned to Mathis, Barré, Saint-Léon, Gaspari, &c. Beneath the "cast" the author had jotted down the most minute instructions as to the period assigned to the events of the play, its mechanism, properties, and decorations. He had even gone so far as to give the exact measure of the double carpet which he deemed a necessary part of the *mise-en-scène*.

We decided that a preliminary reading should take place at

\* Now the Rue Balzac.

Balzac's house on the next day but one, and I undertook to bring Mme. Dorval and Mélingue with me. On the appointed day we all met, and the author opened the proceedings by reading out, in a clear voice, the title of the piece—"Gertrude, tragédie bourgeoise!"

"Oh! oh! Gertrude! A tragedy!" muttered Mme. Dorval in an undertone.

"No interruptions!" said Balzac, laughingly.

Then he resumed his manuscript, and a religious silence prevailed. At the end of the second act he stopped. The length and copiousness of the work rendered it impossible to go any further for the present. On taking leave of the author, it did not occur to any of us to pay him any compliments upon what we had been listening to, our heads being as completely muddled as if we had been drinking so much heady wine.

Without seeming to have noticed our irreverential silence, Balzac escorted us to the door of his house, and arranged for another meeting. When it took place, he read us the last three acts of the play. The fact of Pauline's suicide being treated historically, instead of dramatically, elicited another start from Mme. Dorval. Balzac perceived it, stopped short, looked at her for a moment, and said, "I understand." After that he read straight on to the end of the fifth act, when, without waiting for any remarks from us, he exclaimed: "Piece too long—a quarter of it to be cut out—a narrative to be turned into action—"

"And a title *and* an actor to be changed," added Mme. Dorval promptly and decidedly, pointing to the word "Gertrude" with one hand and with the other to Mélingue, who bowed his head in token of acquiescence.

The suggested change of title encountered no opposition. In place of the original name was substituted that of "La Marâtre," which the play still triumphantly retains. But as to getting rid of Mélingue, that was quite another affair. Balzac could not by any means be brought to sanction this alteration in the projected "cast"; and there ensued a long and tedious, though courteously conducted discussion, which Mélingue eventually brought to a close by saying:

"So then it seems you have set your heart upon my playing the part?"

"Positively."

"Very well, then, I submit."

Deeply affected by Mélingue's surrender, Balzac paced up and down the room two or three times in perfect silence. Then he went to Mélingue, and said :

"No, I cannot permit this. Convinced that you are the man for the part, yes, you should play it on that footing; but from mere deference to my wishes, never! Your giving away to them is a strong proof of friendship and esteem, and, as such, it has deeply moved me. But leave the *rôle* to shift for itself, and give me your hand."

Mélingue was very much touched at this, and there was not one of us who did not share his emotion.

In the result, a series of discussions between Balzac and Mme. Dorval led to divers felicitous modifications of the piece; among others, the addition of the room in which Pauline commits suicide to the one set scene of the drama, namely, the drawing-room, in which all the rest of the action takes place.

Though ill and weak, that courageous actress threw all her energies into the rehearsals of the piece. Nothing could possibly surpass the charming spirit of compliance which she displayed throughout; and deep and lasting was the impression which it left on all who had the good fortune to be associated with her in this undertaking. It was on one of these occasions that, in a sudden access of that winning playfulness in which she so frequently indulged, she seized a pen, and, standing at the prompter's desk, sketched me a little landscape, whose very childishness of execution invests it with a charm, which now, alas! is heightened, since death has hallowed it with the tender consecration that his touch imparts even to the most trifling souvenirs of those whom we have loved and admired. At this very period, indeed, Mme. Dorval's constitution was already undermined by the incurable complaint which was destined so soon to complete its cruel work. Compelled eventually to resign her part, she found a successor in Mme. Lacressonière, who acquitted herself of it —how brilliantly the whole world knows. Yet one day, when we were all congratulating her on her success, she effectually silenced us by saying :

"Ah, what would you have said if *she* had played it?"

It was in June, 1848, that is to say, in the very thick of one of the gravest of all political crises that can possibly be imagined—

at a time, therefore, when the theatres were necessarily almost deserted—that “*La Marâtre*” was first produced. Nevertheless, so great is the attractive power of genius, that all the distinguished men of letters who still remained in Paris flocked to the theatre, and accorded Balzac’s work that warm and sympathetic welcome which it so thoroughly deserved.

On the morrow of the representation, I went to call upon the author. “Well, we gained the victory,” I said to him, in gleeful tones. “Yes,” replied he, “Just such a victory as Charles the Twelfth’s.” In taking leave of him, I ventured to ask him where he had been on the previous evening, and to reproach him for not having made his appearance among us. “Where was I?” he smilingly replied. “Why, slily esconced in the box of Mme. and Mdlle. X.” “Ah! and what happened?” I added, bursting with curiosity. “Well,” replied the author, “the piece interested them profoundly. When the crisis arrived, in which Pauline poisons herself, in order to create the impression that her step-mother has murdered her, the young lady uttered a cry of horror, and darting a tearfully reproachful glance at me, caught hold of her step-mother’s hand, and kissed it with a fervour.”

“That was not assumed,” I interposed.

“I am certain of that,” replied Balzac.

“So, master, you clearly see that after all your piece *may* teach a lesson!”



## James Quin.

BY AUSTIN BRERETON.

THE career of James Quin was one of unbroken prosperity. From his appearance as Falstaff in 1720 until his retirement in 1751, when Garrick had eclipsed him, he scarcely had a rival save the lazy Delane. His word was law ; his managers feared him ; and when he retired to Bath it was with a comfortable income for the remaining fifteen years of his life. He was a good liver and a dangerous duellist. He was born in King Street, Covent Garden, on February 24, 1693. His father, James Quin, of Trinity College, Dublin, was a student at Lincoln's Inn and was called to the bar. He had to go to Ireland in 1700 to look after his property, and he took his boy with him. Quin's mother was a reputed widow. Her husband had gone to the West Indies, had absented himself for seven years, and was generally believed to be dead. Mourning was donned for a due period by the despondent lady, who eventually sought consolation in the companionship of Mr. James Quin, to whom she was united, when a dramatic situation occurred—husband number one turned up, claimed his wife, and had her ! Young Quin was thus rendered illegitimate. But his father did not neglect the boy. He was educated in Dublin until 1710, when he came to London and took chambers in the Temple, as his father destined him for the bar. The elder Quin, however, died shortly after his son came to the metropolis. Our actor being almost penniless, was forced to abandon his studies, and he used to say in after years that he read men, not books. The stage had already gained his affections, and he determined to try his fortune on it. Even at his early age he had many requisites for a good actor : an expressive countenance ; a clear, piercing eye ; a full, melodious voice ; a capital memory ; a distinct pronunciation ; and a majestic figure. Quin is frequently represented as not having appeared on the stage until 1717. But in 1714 he was playing insignificant parts in

Dublin, where he remained a year, when he came to London, on the advice of Chetwood, and was engaged for the season of 1715 at Drury Lane. Here he played the Lieutenant of the Tower in "Lady Jane Grey," the Steward in "What D'ye Call It?" Vulture in "Country Lasses," and other equally small parts. But in December, 1716, he appeared as Antonio—a part chosen by him in after years in preference to Shylock. In November of the same year he had played Bajazet in "Tamerlane" with great success, in place of Mills, who was taken suddenly ill. But not meeting with encouragement at Drury Lane, he passed over to Lincoln's Inn Fields, in 1717, and was attached to Rich's company for seventeen years afterwards. His advance here was not rapid, and it was not till 1720 that he distinguished himself. Rich wished to revive "The Merry Wives of Windsor," but no actor could be found for the part of Falstaff. "I will venture it," said Quin. "You!" cried the astonished manager, "you might as well try Cato after Booth. The character of Falstaff is quite another character from what you think. It is not a little snivelling part that anyone can do, and there isn't a man among you that has any idea of the part but myself." Eventually Quin was allowed to have his way, and on October 22, 1720, the comedy was produced with Quin as Falstaff, Ryan as Ford, Spiller as Dr. Caius, Boheme as Justice Shallow, and Griffiths as Sir Hugh Evans. Quin was so excellent that no actor save John Henderson has since equalled him in this character.

Quin's next hit was made in the character of Old Knowell in the revival of "Every Man in His Humour," in 1725. Three years later, Quin, who had an ear for music, was offered Macheath in "The Beggar's Opera," but he gave up the part to an inferior actor. Shortly after the removal of the company to Covent Garden, in 1732, he acted Lycomedes in Gay's opera of "Achilles." In the beginning of the season of 1734-35, he left Covent Garden and went over to Drury Lane on "such terms as no hired actor ever had before." During his long service with Rich he played no great part excepting Falstaff, yet he was a valued actor, and he had a high sense of his own importance. He was apt to be curt on occasions. "I am at Bath," he once wrote to Rich. "Stay there and be d——d," was the equally laconic reply of his manager. From the time of Quin's establishment at Drury Lane, until the appearance of Garrick in 1741, he held the foremost rank in his

profession. His Cato and Brutus were excellent performances. When he was about to act the former character the remembrance of Barton Booth tempted him to announce that Cato would "only be attempted" by him, but at the words "Thanks be to the gods, my boy has done his duty," the audience applauded with universal assent, and cried "Booth outdone!" His Henry VIII, Volpone, Gloster, Apemantus, and "all the Falstaffs," were also among his best performances. He failed in Macbeth, Othello, Richard III, and Lear. Quin seems to have had all the faults of the old school of actors—he was dull, heavy, pompous, and given to immeasurably long pauses in his speeches. In 1735, Aaron Hill published a paper called "The Prompter," in which he attacked some of the principal actors of his day, but more particularly Colley Cibber and Quin. Cibber only laughed at his remarks, but Quin got angry at them. The paragraph which gave offence to the actor contains much truth, and points out the worst defects of Quin's style and of the school to which he belonged :—

And as to you Mr. All-weight, you lose the advantages of your deliberate articulation, distinct use of pausing, solemn significance, and that composed air and gravity of your motion; for though there arises from all these good qualities an esteem that will continue and increase the number of your friends, yet those among them who wish best to your interest, will always be uneasy at observing perfection so nearly within your reach, and your spirits not disposed to stretch out and take possession. To be *always* deliberate and solemn is an error, as certainly, though not as unpardonably, as *never* to be so. To pause where no pauses are necessary, is the way to destroy their effect where the sense stands in need of their assistance. And, though dignity is finely maintained by the weight of majestic composure, yet are there scenes in your parts where the voice should be sharp and impatient, the look disordered and agonised, the action precipitate and turbulent; for the sake of such difference as we see in some smooth canal, where the stream is scarce visible compared with the other end of the same canal, rushing rapidly down a cascade, and breaking beauties which owe their attraction to their violence.

Quin's deliberate delivery is illustrated by his playing in "The Fair Penitent," when one night Garrick, all eagerness and fire, had challenged Horatio. Quin made so long a pause before replying that a man in the gallery called out "Why don't you give the gentleman an answer?"

"With a bottle of claret and a full house," says Tate Wilkinson, "the instant he was on the stage, he was Sir John Falstaff himself. His comely countenance, his expressive eye, his happy swell of voice, and natural importance of deportment, all united to make up a most characteristic piece of acting; and when detected in

the lie, there was such a gloomy feature and expression as will never be equalled." Foote was enthusiastic in praise of this performance. "I can only recommend a man," he said, "who wants to see a character perfectly played, to see Mr. Quin in the part of Falstaff, and if he does not express a desire of spending an evening with that merry mortal, why, I would not spend one with *him* if he were to pay my reckoning." In 1761, ten years after his retirement, he was brought into notice once more by the publication of "The Rosciad," in which Churchill described his theatrical character :—

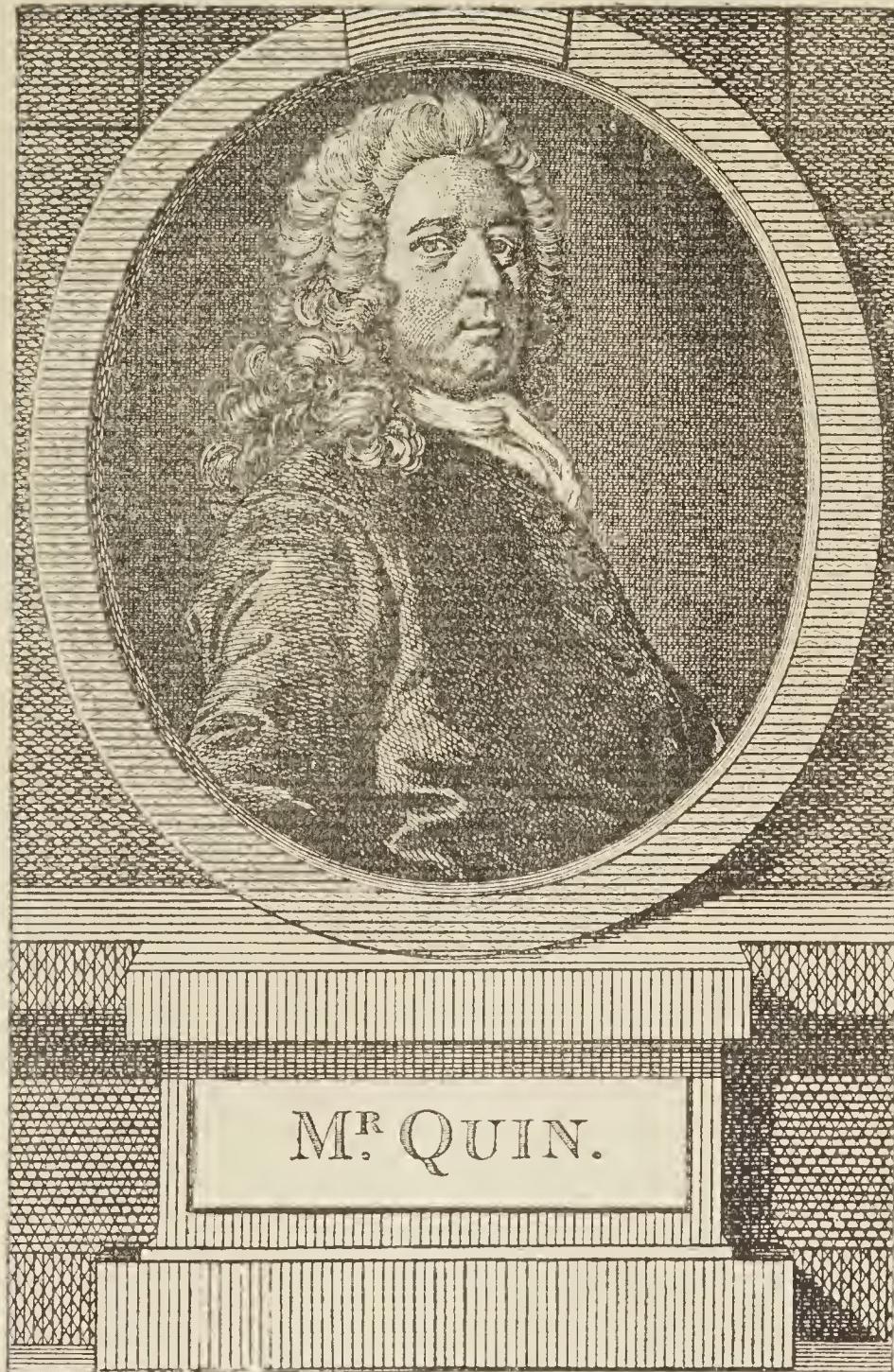
"Quin, from afar, lur'd by the scent of fame,  
A stage Leviathan, put in his claim ;  
Pupil of Betterton and Booth. Alone,  
Sullen he walk'd, and deem'd the chair his own.  
\* \* \*

His words bore sterling weight, nervous and strong,  
In manly tides of sense they roll'd along :  
Happy in art, he chiefly had pretence  
To keep up numbers, yet not forfeit sense.  
No actor ever greater heights could reach  
In all the labour'd artifice of speech.  
\* \* \*

His eyes, in gloomy sockets taught to roll,  
Proclaim'd the sullen habit of his soul :  
Heavy and phlegmatic, he trod the stage,  
Too proud for tenderness, too dull for rage.  
\* \* \*

In fancy'd scenes, as in life's real plan,  
He could not for a moment sink the man.  
In whate'er cast his character was laid,  
Self still, like oil, upon the surface play'd.  
Nature, in spite of all his skill, crept in—  
Horatio, Dorax, Falstaff—still 'twas QUIN."

His farewell to the stage took place on May 20, 1751, when he acted Horatio in "The Fair Penitent." He then retired to Bath, where he chiefly spent the remaining fifteen years of his life. He came to London, however, once or twice, to play Falstaff for the benefit of his friend, Lacy Ryan, the last occasion of his performing that character being on March 19, 1753. In the following year Ryan asked him to play again, but Quin had lost some of his teeth, and so declined to accede to his friend's request. "I would *play* for you if I could," he wrote, "but I will not *whistle* for you. I have willed you a thousand pounds. If you want money you may have it, and save my executors trouble." Ryan took the thousand pounds. When the poet Thomson was in durance vile for debt, Quin visited him, and after supper gave the astonished author a bank-note for a hundred pounds, saying



MR. QUIN.



he estimated the pleasure which he had derived from reading “The Seasons” at exactly that value. Thomson, remembering this act of kindness, paid a tribute to the actor in his “Castle of Indolence” :—

“ With double force th’enlivened scene he wakes,  
Yet quits not nature’s bounds. He knows how to keep  
Each due decorum. Now the heart he shakes,  
And now with well-urg’d sense th’enlighten’d judgment takes.”

There is yet another anecdote on record which helps to illustrate the genuine generosity of his nature. Richard Winstone, an actor and a friend of Quin’s, once quarrelled with his manager, and, abruptly leaving London, went to Wales. Two years later, the vessel in which he was sailing was wrecked on the Welsh coast, and Winstone lost his clothes and his small store of cash. In this distressed condition he scrambled up to London, and sulked in bed, in a lodging in Covent Garden, for two days. Quin, hearing of Winstone’s distress, had him restored to the theatre at his old salary, and then called upon his tailor and purchased him a suit of clothes. He took the following odd way of announcing to Winstone the change in his fortunes : “ Why are you not at rehearsal ? ” he asked. On Quin explaining the case, poor Winstone fell on his knees for gratitude. “ But, z——ds, my dear Jemmy,” he said, “ what shall I do for clothes and a little ready money.” “ As for clothes,” was the reply, “ there they are ; but as for money, you must put your hand in you own pocket.” Quin had placed ten guineas there.

It fell to Quin’s lot to kill two brother actors. The first to die by his hand was Bowen, who quarrelled with Quin because the latter asserted that Ben Jonson acted Jacomo in “The Libertine” better than Bowen. Bowen pursued Quin to the Pope’s Head, where Quin was forced to stand on the defensive. Bowen was mortally wounded. This was on April 17, 1717. He died three days later. Quin was acquitted in the July following, and shortly afterwards returned to the stage. His next encounter took place a year later, in consequence of an unlucky slip made by a little Welsh actor named Williams, who was playing Decius to Quin’s Cato. He entered with “Cæsar sends health to Cato,” but he affectedly pronounced the latter, “Keeto.” Quin, irritated at this, instead of replying—

“ Could he send it  
To Cato’s slaughtered friends it would be welcome,”

exclaimed, “Would he had sent a better messenger!” This brought the derision of the audience down upon Williams, who was naturally angered at Quin, and lay in wait for him in the Piazza. Quin would have defended himself with his cane, but he was forced to draw in self-defence, and after a few passes poor Williams lay lifeless on the pavement. Quin was again brought to the Old Bailey, and again acquitted. In 1739, Quin was engaged in yet a third encounter. He quarrelled at the Bedford Coffee-house with Colley Cibber’s scapegrace son, Theophilus, whom he dragged into the Piazza. Quin was cut on the fingers, and Cibber slightly wounded in the left arm. Their wounds having been dressed, the pair were for fighting again, but the company separated them, and prevented further mischief.

Despite a pompous and almost insolent manner, Quin had much goodness of heart. When Miss Bellamy came to the stage she had many admirers amongst the opposite sex. So Quin called her to him, and delivered himself thus: “My dear girl! you are vastly followed, I hear. Do not let the love of finery or any other inducement permit you to make an indiscretion. Men in general are rascals. You are young and engaging, and therefore ought to be doubly cautious. If you want anything which money can purchase, come to me, and say, ‘James Quin, give me such a thing,’ and my purse shall always be at your service.” On the other hand, he could be brutal enough on occasion. A foolish mother pestered him about her baby, but Quin took no notice of the infant. “Lord! Mr. Quin, can you be so strange as not to love children?” “You mistake me exceedingly, madam,” replied the veteran; “I love children of all things—boiled with bacon and greens.” Quin licking his lips as he said this, the frightened mother left the wit to himself. His powers of retort never failed him. A little while before his death he was painfully crawling along the promenade at Bath, when a pert young officer, after dancing about and showing other signs of activity, said, “There, Mr. Quin, what would you give to do as I do?” “Young gentleman, he replied, “I would give a great deal: I would be content to be as *foolish* as you are.” When he first retired to Bath the actors of the city were remarkable for the shortness of their stature. Quin, being present at a performance of “Soliman, the Emperor of the Turks,” was asked by the manager what he thought of the

company. “By heavens, they are but *sprats of Mussulmen*,” was his punning criticism. He was considered a great epicure, and was particularly fond of John Dory, a haunch of venison, and claret. Dining one night with a rich but stingy nobleman, his host apologised for not being able to offer him more than one bottle of wine, as he had lost the key of his wine-cellars. Whilst coffee was being prepared he showed Quin, amongst other curiosities, an ostrich. “This bird has a peculiar property,” said the host, “he swallows iron.” “Does he?” replied the wit; “then very likely he has swallowed the key of your wine-cellar.”

While on the stage, he and Garrick were not very intimate, but after his retirement he was a frequent visitor at Hampton. While on a visit to Garrick in 1765 an eruption broke out in his hand, which so affected his spirits that it brought on an attack of hypocondria; fever followed, and he died, at his own house in Bath, on January 21, 1766. The day before he died he drank a bottle of claret, and, being aware of his approaching dissolution, said he could wish that the last tragic scene were over, though he was in hopes that he should be able to go through it with becoming dignity. He was buried in the Abbey Church, Bath. Garrick wrote the following epitaph for his monument:—

“That tongue that set the table in a roar,  
And charm’d the public ear, is heard no more;  
Clos’d are those eyes, the harbingers of wit,  
Which spake before the tongue, what *Shakespeare* writ;  
Cold is that hand, that living was stretch’d forth  
At friendship’s call, to succour modest worth;  
Here lies JAMES QUIN. Deign, reader, to be taught,  
Whate’er thy strength of body, force of thought,  
In nature’s happiest mould, however cast,  
‘To this complexion thou must come at last.’”

By his will he left £2,371, in various sums ranging from five hundred pounds to twenty guineas, and including fifty pounds for “Mr. Thomas Gainsborough, limner.” He also left, “as by a very foolish promise,” his gold repeating watch, chain, and seals to one Daniel Leckie. Soon after his death there was published, by S. Bladon, 12mo, “The Life of Mr. James Quin, Comedian.” It contains a portrait of Quin as a frontispiece, and it is dedicated to Garrick. It is a very scarce pamphlet, and it is also exceedingly inaccurate and full of irrelevant matter. Like many another theatrical memoir of the last century, it requires handling with the tongs.

## “Hamlet,” with Alterations.

BY PERCY FITZGERALD.

IT is astonishing to think that a man of such nice and delicate taste as Garrick should have been prompted to lay violent hands on Shakespeare’s great work, and to have mangled it in the most cruel and unscrupulous fashion. All are alive to the difficulties of presenting the accumulated slaughters of the last act of “Hamlet,” but the judicious have felt that no hand could mend the matter. Garrick, however, shortly before his retirement, set himself to the task. One of the persons he consulted on the matter was Dr. Hoadly, who encouraged him heartily, and sent him specimens of what he thought were judicious alterations. In January, 1773, he wrote to the chief conspirator :—

As to “Hamlet,” we have before now talked of the possibility of altering it ; and, as it was resolved at last, I am sorry I knew nothing of the matter. By your account, and twenty-five lines only added, *I fear too little has been done.* The part which, in my mind, wanted most, and admitted of good alterations, was Hamlet’s and Ophelia’s behaviour to each other. There is a poor cause assigned for all her grief, and madness, and death—solely her father’s being killed accidentally, a fellow you are nothing concerned about, who talks one minute like a *Solomon* and the next like a *simpleton*.

George Steevens also encouraged him in the profane work. Thus stimulated, he prepared the tragedy, and on February 8, 1774, the new version was produced. The alterations were startling. As Boaden says :—

If there be any one act of his management which we should wish to blot out from these pages, it is his rash violation of the whole scheme of Shakespeare’s “Hamlet.” All the contrivances of Shakespeare, by which he added *absence from the scene* to the melancholy *irresolution* of the character, were rendered abortive. It became as much a *monodrame* as Timon, and the *passive* Hamlet was kept on the rack of perpetual *exertion*. His very speeches were trimmed up with startling exclamations and furious resolves ; and even Yorick himself was thrown out of the play, to render the wit and pathos of Sterne inapplicable and unintelligible. It was an actor’s mutilation of all

Garrick wrote to a friend this strange account of his act :—

I have ventured to produce "Hamlet," with alterations. It was the most imprudent thing I ever did in all my life; but I had sworn I would not leave the stage till I had rescued that noble play from all the rubbish of the fifth act. I have brought it forth without the gravedigger's trick and the fencing-match. The alteration was received with general approbation, beyond my most warm expectations.

It was known generally that the gravediggers, the promiscuous slaughter of the last scene, with a vast number of items and incidents, had been removed bodily; but, strange to say, no one has seen a copy. It was never printed. Managers in the country applied for copies, but were refused. At the sale of Kemble's library, the original copy presented by Mr. Garrick himself to Kemble was sold, but who was the purchaser does not appear. This copy, however, had been seen by Boaden and Mr. Steevens, who gave an outline of the changes. Hence, there has always existed the curiosity—which is always found in matters, however trifling, where curiosity cannot be gratified—to learn what had become of this performance, and what was the exact nature of the alterations.

Last year, being on the track of "old plays"—always a tempting and engaging pursuit, which has, moreover, fascinated the great actors, Garrick, Kemble, Henderson, Webster, and Creswick having each formed their collections—I found my way to the Kennington Road, where there existed a certain store-house for such curiosities, directed by an excellent and intelligent pair named Grose, whose quaint catalogues bear a likeness of the well-known corpulent captain of the same name, well distinguished as a curious *dilettante*, where booksellers had purchased largely of the books of the late "Ben" Webster, who had many of his rarest old plays disposed of for the usual "song" at his death. A great many of them are now happily stored on my own shelves, reposing in comfort and honoured tranquillity, having happily passed from the somewhat rude and knockabout existence of the book-store.

Among the plays thus handed over to me, I found one that had all the air of a prompt-book—the usual brown paper cover, the stage directions, interleaves, &c. This proved to be a quarto edition of "Hamlet," not one of the oldest quartos, which, as such, are worth far more than their weight in gold. This happened to be a quarto of the year 1703, "as it is now acted by his Majesty's servants"—i.e., by Betterton and his companions—full of strange misprints and readings. The alterations are in the hand of

Garrick's well-known prompter, Hopkins, and it is signed with his initials, and it was entitled :—

“HAMLET,”  
as altered by  
DAVID GARRICK, Esq.,  
1777.

Here, then, was this long-lost, curious piece. The first thing that strikes me is the enormous amount of “cutting” which D. Garrick, Esq., dealt out to his victims. This, however, is but a negative sort of alteration. It is not, however, till we come to the fifth act that the knife—or chopper, rather—was used heartily.

This Hoadly was eager to have a share in the sacrilege, and plied his friend with suggestions. Among other plans he sent the following one for “remodelling” certain passages which seemed to the doctor to be imperfect. Garrick, however, preferred his own mutilations.

Dr. J. Hoadly to Mr. Garrick.

St. Mary's, Sept. 30th, 1773.

DEAR SIR,—I have put a few thoughts which occurred to me on your alteration of “Hamlet” upon paper, which you are welcome to make use of or not, as you please; if I had not thought them consistent and agreeable to the play, and almost necessary to Hamlet's character, I had not wrote them down.

When Ophelia has talked to her father of *repelling Hamlet's letters*, it would not be unnatural for her to give a late one of Hamlet's to him, with which he goes immediately to the King. Several critics have thought that the death of her father only is not a just and adequate cause for Ophelia's madness and death; and as many have thought the character of Hamlet much injured by his cruel behaviour to Ophelia.

In the second scene of Ophelia and Polonius, p. 262 of Theobald's 8vo. edition, I would leave out

“Come, go with me. I will go seek the King.”

After “to lack discretion.”

OPH. . . . There's his last letter to me:  
This packet, when the next occasion suits,  
I shall return.

POL. . . . Go we with this to the King.  
This must be known.

After Hamlet's speech “To be, or, not to be”—

“Soft you now,  
The fair Ophelia!—I have made too free  
With that sweet lady's ear. My place in Denmark,  
The time's misrule, my heavenly-urged revenge,

Matters of giant-stature gorge her love,  
As fish the cormorant. She drops a tear,  
As from her book she steals her eye on me."

In the play scene the pantomime of the poisoning was solely left out. At the end of the scene of Ophelia's madness, the King sums up the situation in the following lines:—

KING : O Gertrude, Gertrude !

When sorrows come, they come not single spies,  
But in battalions. First her father slain,  
Next your son gone, and he most frantic author  
Of his own just remove ; the people muddled,  
Thick and unwholesome in their thoughts, and whisper  
For good Polonius's death. We've done but greenly,  
In private to inter him ; poor Ophelia,  
Divided from herself, and her fair judgement  
(Without which we're pictures or me'er beasts),  
Last, and as much containing as all these,  
Her brother, tempest beaten back to Denmark,  
Feeds on this wonder, keeps himself in clouds,  
And wants not buzzers to infest his ear  
With pestilent speeches of his father's death.  
Wherein necessity of matter beggar'd,  
Will nothing stick our persons to arraign  
In ear, and ear. O, my dear Gertrude, this—  
This like to a murdering piece in many places  
Give me superfluous death.

[*Exeunt.*]

LAERTES : O treble woe,  
Fall ten times double on that cursed head  
Whose wicked deed deprived thee of  
Thy most ingenious sense. Let me but see him reason !  
'Twould warm the very sickness of my heart  
That I should live, and tell him to his teeth  
Thus didst thou ! O my poor undone Ophelia !

*Enter HAMLET P.S.*

HAMLET : What is he, whose griefs

Bear such an emphasis ? Whose phrase of sorrow  
Conjures the wand'ring stars, and makes them stand  
Like wonder-wounded hearers ? This is I,  
Hamlet the Dane !

LAERTES : Perdition catch thy soul. (*Laying his hand upon his sword.*)

KING : Keep them asunder.

HAM. : Why I will fight with him upon this theme  
Until my eyelids will no longer wag.

QUEEN : O, my son ! what theme ?

HAM. : I loved Ophelia ; forty thousand brothers  
Could not with all their quantity of love  
Make up my sum. What wilt thou do for her ?

KING : O, he is mad, Laertes.

HAM. : Come, show me what thou'l't do for her !

Wilt weep ? wilt fight ? wilt fast ? wilt tear thyself ?  
With drink up Eisel ? Eat a crocodile ?  
I'll do't—and more—nay, and you'll mouth it, sir,  
I'll rant as well as thou.

QUEEN: O Hamlet! Hamlet!

For love of heav'n forbear him. (*To Laertes.*)

KING: We will not bear this insult to our presence.

Hamlet, I did command you hence to England.

Affection hitherto has curb'd my power;

But you have trampled on Allegiance,

And now shall feel my wrath. Guards!

HAM.: First feel mine—— (*Stabs him.*)

There, thou incestuous, murderous, damned Dane!

There's for thy treachery, lust, and usurpation!

(*King falls and dies.*)

QUEEN: Mercy, mercy, heav'n! Save me from my son!

(*She runs out, o.p.*)

LAER.: What treason ho! Thus, then, do I revenge (*draws*)

My father, sister, and my King.

(*They fight. Hamlet is wounded by Laertes, and falls.*)

HOR.: And I my Prince and friend. (*Draws.*)

HAM.: Hold, good Horatio, 'tis the hand of heaven.

Administered by him this precious balm

For all my wounds.

*Enter MESSENGER.*

Speak, speak! What of my mother?

MESSENGER: Struck with the horror of the scene, she fled;

But ere she reach'd her chamber door she fell

Entranc'd and motionless, unable to sustain the load

Of agony and sorrow.

HAM.: O my Horatio! watch the wretched Queen.

If from this trance she wakes, O may she breath

An hour of penitence ere madness ends her.

Exchange forgiveness with me, brave Laertes.

O may thy father's death come not on me,

Nor mine on thee.

LAERTES: Heav'n make thee free of it.

HAMLET: I die, I die, Horatio! Come thou near (*to Laertes*)

Take this hand from me. Unite your virtues

(*Joins Horatio's hand to Laertes'.*)

To calm this troubled land. I can no more—

Nor have I more to ask—but mercy, heav'n!

(*Dies.*)

HOR.: Now cracks a noble heart. Good night, sweet Prince,

And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest.

Take up the bodies; such a sight as this

Becomes the field, but here shows much amiss.

FINIS.

This precious "Hamlet, with Alterations" was received, Mr. Adolphus tells us, but flatly. Garrick, however, believed that the alterations were well received; while Mr. Victor declared that "they were far from being universally liked." However, the fact remains that the mangled version was played for about ten years. It was reserved for the management of Sheridan to return to the old version which had been so scurvily treated.

## Farewell to Liszt.

THE time, alas! has come to bid farewell  
To this our Master, who—though brief the space  
Of his abiding in our English land—  
Has won a place of vantage in our hearts,  
And, should we ne'er set eyes on him again,  
Will live in our remembrance evermore.  
The stately form, the reverend white hair,  
The captivating smile, the radiant look  
Informed by genius—sparkling and yet soft,  
Lustrous with inner light of kindness,  
Will linger with us when he shall be gone ;  
And those to whom his gifts have been revealed,  
Who round the charméd clavichord have sate  
When Francis Liszt has made it live and breathe,  
And laugh and weep, and whisper words of love,  
Tune gipsy dances on the Puszta wild,  
Wail out the mournful numbers of a dirge,  
Or chant the fighting Magyar's battle-song,  
Will often fancy that they see again  
Tone-pictures fashioned by the Master's hands.

Those slender hands that conjure from the keys  
Poems of sound and spell-fraught phantasies,  
Have scattered boundless bounties to the poor,  
Have worked their magic on behalf of Art,  
Have toiled to honour Masters of the Past,  
To foster young ambition, and assuage  
The bitterness of many an humble woe.

Let us, who love the artist, ne'er forget  
The reverence we owe unto the man  
Whose grandly reckless generosity  
Set up great Beethoven in bronze at Bonn,  
When forty millions of Germania's sons  
Were asked in vain to pay the tribute due.  
Teutonic thrift shrank from the costly charge ;  
Not so the noble Magyar. When the chief  
Of Hungary's Five Rivers burst its banks

And overflowed the streets of stately Pesth,  
 Bringing swift ruin to a thousand homes,  
 Who poured out timely aid in golden streams  
 And stemmed the terrors of the ruthless flood ?

'Twas Liszt ! His splendid gains he e'er has held  
 In trust for all his suff'ring fellow-men,  
 No matter what their country, creed, or race ;  
 And that which he had earned by strenuous toil,  
 They needing help, was no more his, but theirs.

Thus has he lived his life from youth to age,  
 And now, meseems, around his silvered locks  
 Hovers the glimmer of a halo, shed  
 By countless works of Charity and Love.

Not unrewarded are his gracious deeds ;  
 What honours and distinctions may be given  
 By mighty Emperors and Kings, are his ;  
 The proudest Orders claim him for their Knight,  
 And jewelled stars shine brightly on his breast.  
 The architects of history, and those  
 Who guide the thoughts and form the tastes of men,  
 For half a cycle past have been his friends.

But chief of his rewards, more precious far  
 Than Royal favour or supreme renown,  
 Is the affection of the thankful poor,  
 Who summon down God's blessings on his head,  
 As we do now, whilst bidding him adieu,  
 In words all insufficient to express  
 The love and veneration that we feel.  
 Great artist ! true philanthropist ! dear friend !  
 Our hearts go with thee. Francis Liszt, farewell !

W.M. BEATTY-KINGSTON



## Our Musical-Box.

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ON the third of last month Franz Liszt, the most eminent and distinguished of living musicians, and the greatest pianist whom the world has ever known, arrived in this country, which he had not visited since the year 1841, his reception at the hands of the London musical public forty-five years ago not having been such as to encourage him to recross the Channel until the other day. It has been difficult for Liszt to surmount the disfavour with which his former experiences of English prejudices and narrow-mindedness had caused him to regard perfidious Albion ; the amazing development of musical taste and culture that has accrued in these islands during the Victorian period has not come under his personal cognisance, and, until very lately, he has had no opportunity of observing any practical detail of the surprising progress achieved in every executant branch of the musical art, in composition, and in intelligent receptiveness by the general public of new methods, which are no longer denounced and hounded down merely because of their novelty—as was the case in times within the memory of middle-aged English musicians—but are received with courtesy, studied with interest, and keenly appreciated, if intrinsically meritorious. The dead set made at the late Richard Wagner's works by influential English musical critics when those works were first introduced to the notice of London audiences, and the cold attitude maintained for some years by these latter towards compositions which Liszt regarded as the noblest inspirations of modern genius, strengthened his unfavourable impressions of the British nation, as far as its musicality was concerned, and confirmed his reluctance to visit these shores. Liszt entertained for Wagner a no less fervent worship than that of which he himself has been the object in Germany throughout the past quarter of a century ; and the hesitancy displayed by France and England alike in recognising the surpassing splendour and force of the Saxon master's compositions is accountable in great measure for the disinclination to return to Paris and London that has been so long and persistently manifested by Wagner's venerable father-in-law. That disinclination has, however, at length been overcome by the entreaties of old friends and former pupils ; and the Canon of Albano has certainly had no reason to complain of any lack of enthusiasm in connection with his public and private receptions on the banks of Seine or Thames. Here, as in Paris, all the most eminent musicians of the day have unanimously paid him ample tribute of respect and admiration ; their example has been followed by the leading repre-

sentatives of literature and the plastic arts; British Royalty has displayed the liveliest interest in his illustrious personality and in the festal performances given in his honour; the concert-rooms in which he has appeared, the saloons honoured by his presence during his brief stay here, have been thronged by the elect of English society. The efficiency with which his works have been rendered in this metropolis has, I rejoice to say, considerably modified the views he is known to have entertained with respect, at least, to our executant capacities in the musical line; and it is no small satisfaction to English music-lovers as well as *virtuosi* to know that Franz Liszt has quitted this country strong in the newly-acquired conviction that its inhabitants may justly look forward to a brilliant future as a musical nation.

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From Paris to London Liszt was accompanied by M<sup>me</sup>. Munkácsy—the wife of the eminent Hungarian genre-painter, who executed a fine portrait of the Master during the latter's brief sojourn in the French capital—as well as by a young English lady well-known in London musical circles; by his latest *élève de choix*, Herr Stavenhagen, a pianist of musical promise; and by Mr. Max Lindlar, a member of the great Bechstein firm of piano-forte makers. At Calais the Canon was met by Mr. Alfred Littleton and Mr. Mackenzie, the genial composer of "Colomba," and at Dover by Mr. Walter Bache, Herr Emil Leonhard Bach, and the wife of the present writer. He bore the fatigues of the nine hours' journey by rail and boat extremely well, despite his great age, and exhibited no sign of lassitude on his arrival at Penge Station, where arrangements had been made with the railway company to stop the Dover express for his special convenience, Mr. Littleton's residence (to which Liszt had been invited) being situate at Sydenham. A strong body of Hungarians awaited him at the station with floral tributes, shouts of "Eljen!" and oratorical greetings. His host had assembled between two and three hundred representatives of London artistic and literary society to bid the great musician welcome to our metropolis, and in the course of the evening an interesting selection of his vocal and instrumental works was ably performed by English executants. To the deep disappointment of all present, the Canon did not play; indeed, the request that he should do so was not urged upon him, in consideration of the long day's travelling he had undergone. To be the hero of a numerously attended social entertainment is, moreover, a trying and exhausting function for one who was born in the great comet-year. During the Westwood House reception Liszt was on his feet, exchanging salutations and conventionalities with hundreds of his admirers, for the best part of two hours—in a word, passing through a social ordeal that might well have worn out many a man much younger than himself. At 11 p.m. he retired, and Mr. Littleton's guests addressed themselves to the formidable enterprise of getting back to town as best they might.

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On Monday afternoon, April 5, a grand rehearsal of the oratorio "St. Elizabeth" took place at the St. James's Hall, under the direction of Mr.

A. C. Mackenzie, and was attended by an audience comprising well-nigh every notoriety of musical London. Dr. Liszt was present throughout the performance, which appeared to give him great satisfaction on the whole, although he more than once offered suggestions respecting the *tempi*, &c., to the gifted conductor in the course of the second and third parts of the work. Madame Albani sang the title *role* so admirably as to elicit repeated compliments and congratulations from the venerable composer. Great praise was also deservedly bestowed upon Mr. Armbruster's clever pupil, Miss Cramer, who sustained the somewhat ungrateful part of the Landgravine Sophie with remarkable *verve* and efficiency. On the following evening the oratorio was given in the presence of the most numerous gathering ever theretofore assembled within the precincts of St. James's Hall; *tout Londres*, in fact, the Prince and Princess of Wales, Duchess of Edinburgh, and Marchioness of Lorne occupying chairs in front of the sofa stalls. During the "wait" between the first and second parts His Royal Highness sought Dr. Liszt in the artists' room, and conducted him thence into the body of the hall, where he presented him to the Princesses. Seldom has such demonstrative excitement been witnessed in a London concert-room as that displayed on the occasion in question. Ladies of fashion stood upon benches and chairs in order to obtain a good view of the aged Master, whose every movement was the signal for outburst of enthusiastic acclamation. Liszt himself was far more fervently applauded than was his music, which, in comparison with his august and impressive person, proved but a secondary attraction. There are great beauties in the orchestral score of "St. Elizabeth," which, as a practical illustration of Liszt's theory and method of composition, leaves nothing to be desired; but, as Rossini is reported to have said of "Tannhaeuser," *il y-a des longueurs*, and the lack of organic melody that characterises its vocal parts is not calculated to obtain for it a high place in the favour of the English musical public. "St. Elizabeth" is a *chef d'œuvre* of constructive ingenuity—a marvel of contrapuntal and instrumental contrivance; but these are not the specialities which confer popularity upon any musical work in this country, where tunefulness still takes the *pas* of mathematical demonstration, in connection with vocal and instrumental performances. The chief charm of "St. Elizabeth" is its masterly orchestration, in which respect it is entitled to rank side by side with Wagner's most elaborate musical narratives; but that charm appeals to the sympathies of the few, not of the many, and cannot, indeed, be fully appreciated by any save those who are initiated in the purely instrumental secrets by which original effects and novel contrasts of tone-colours are achieved. That this important work would prove "caviare to the million" was the opinion I formed with respect to it when I first heard it on the occasion of its initial production in the Redouten-Saal at Vienna on April 4, 1869; and its recent repetitions have fully confirmed me in that view.

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A few hours before the great event in St. James's Hall, Canon Liszt paid a visit to the Royal Academy of Music, where the students regaled

him with some creditable renderings of selections from his own works, as well as of compositions by our gifted countrymen Sterndale Bennett, George Macfarren, and A. C. Mackenzie. Under the leadership of that consummate musician, William Shakespeare, who has wrought such wonders during his too-brief reign in Tenterden Street, the academic *alumni* proved themselves worthy of playing before the greatest orchestral conductor of the age, and were rewarded for their labour of love by hearing Liszt play, in all probability for the first and last time in their lives. To the pianists of the future, who muster in great strength at our Conservatoire, the Master's magical touch and infinite variety of tone-production were at once revelations and lessons never to be forgotten, but rather to be taken to heart and "thought out" with steadfast perseverance for many a year to come. For Liszt, although himself prone to allege that his executant powers are failing him, still retains that supreme command of the pianoforte's resources in which he has known no rival during the past sixty years. Under his fingers the key board sings with a passion and tenderness that no other human hand is capable of eliciting from it. The Academy pupils are to be congratulated upon having heard the utmost that can be done to vitalise an ingenious piece of mechanism and give it a soul, as well as a voice.

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On the 7th ult., in obedience to Her Majesty's commands, Dr. Liszt went down to Windsor and played to the Queen, to whom, as I understand, his inimitable performance gave infinite pleasure. It must have recalled sweet and sorrowful memories to the august lady, who, when she last heard him play in England, was a happy young wife and mother, just entering upon her twenty-second year. Mr. Walter Bache's reception at the Grosvenor Gallery in honour of Dr. Liszt came off on the following evening, and was attended by every English musician of note residing in this metropolis, as well by men of light and leading in all branches of literature and the arts. It was, indeed, an exhaustive gathering of distinguished composers and executants, such as can have left no doubt in Liszt's mind as to the genuine and robust musicality of the British nation. Attired in a plain black cassock, his thick white locks falling heavily on his shoulders, and his fine face beaming with smiles, the venerable Canon entered the gallery leaning on his host's arm, and escorted by a strong body-guard of personal friends. As he advanced to the place assigned to him in front of the platform at the further end of the principal salon, plaudits greeted him on every side; and when he had taken his seat the musical entertainment, consisting exclusively of selections from his works, forthwith commenced. It consisted of an "Angelus" for strings, a "Chorus of Angels" for female voices, a pianoforte arrangement of the "Bénédiction de Dieu," ably rendered by Mr. Bache, and three songs from Schiller's "Tell," which Mr. Winch sang in his best manner. Shortly after the programme of the evening had come to a close, Dr. Liszt, in compliance with the manifest wish of everybody present, sat down to the piano, and played—as he alone of living men can play—a romance by Chopin, and his own delicate "Chanson d'Amour." On the

following evening he was present at a concert—the programme of which consisted exclusively of selections from his miscellaneous works—given by Herr L. Emil Bach at the St. James's Hall, and was again the recipient of an extraordinary public ovation. Every executant connected with this excellent entertainment fulfilled his or her functions in a manner deserving the highest praise. Herr Bach played the solo part of the great E flat concerto with fine spirit and expression, displaying a perfect mastery of its formidable technical difficulties. Liszt's beautiful setting of Heine's "Lorely" found a most sympathetic interpreter in Miss Liza Lehmann, and the gifted Henschels sang several of his charming songs with the high intelligence and artistic finish that characterise all their vocal performances. Signor Alberto Randegger had gathered together a strong body of elect instrumentalists, who, under his leadership, gave thoroughly efficient renderings of the stately march from "Christus," the symphonic poem "Orpheus," and the accompaniments to the "Rhapsodie Hongroise," and "Polonaise," brilliantly played by the concert-giver. Later on, Dr. Liszt went "over the way" to listen to some amateur orchestral-playing, of which he expressed his approval; indeed, he has more than once observed to me that it is in this particular direction that our musical advancement within the last half century has most vividly impressed him. "When I first came to this country," he said to me one day, "you English were already justly celebrated for the fine qualities of your choral singing. It was your musical speciality. Your choirs were superior to those of the Continent in the quality of their voices, and the purity of their intonation. They are so still. But your orchestras were lacking in more than one essential virtue, which they have acquired since that time, and, as far as the executant element was concerned, you had nothing to be proud of outside strictly professional limits. That is all changed now. Your orchestras have delighted me, and your amateurs have surprised me—I need not say, most agreeably. Englishmen seem to me to have gained more, in the way of sheer musicality, than any other people during the past forty or fifty years."

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On Saturday, April 10, the venerable Canon attended another "Liszt Concert" at the Crystal Palace; he was entertained in the evening by the German Club in Mortimer Street, of which he had been elected an honorary member, and gracefully claimed the privilege, "as the youngest of the affiliated," to contribute his item to the programme. The following afternoon I had the great joy of receiving him in my house, and of hearing him extemporese superbly upon the theme of one of my daughter's songs. That evening he dined *en famille* with the Prince and Princess of Wales. On Monday Dr. Duka, the Præses of the Hungarian colony in London, held a reception, which was attended by some six hundred persons, in his honour, and he subsequently attended the Popular Concert at St. James's Hall. And so it went on throughout the week. On Wednesday evening he was Mr. Henry Irving's guest at the Lyceum, where, after watching with lively interest a capital performance of "Faust," he supped with Mephistopheles and Gretchen in the old

Beefsteak room. It was a merry party, *hanc obliviscari* by any of those bidden by the Denying Spirit to meet the Master. I am proud to record the fact that I and mine were among the fortunate ones, whose number included Professor Max Müller, Lord and Lady Wharncliffe, Madame Munkácsy, Mr. and Mrs. Comyns Carr, Dr. Morell Mackenzie, Miss Nelia Casella, Mr. Bram Stoker, Mr. Harry Loveday, and all the members of Dr. Liszt's suite. The room in which so many memorable *symposia* had been held was entirely redecorated for the occasion ; the supper-table, viewed from the doorway of the Lyceum armoury, bore the aspect of a huge bed of daffodils, adorned here and there with sheeny silver and sparkling crystal. To see Liszt and Irving sitting opposite to one another, scanning each other's lineaments with undisguised interest, was indeed a memorable sight. There are few faces in the world displaying such fascinating combinations of power and sweetness as these two. The great pianist and the great actor, from the first moment of their meeting, were keenly sympathetic to one another. Liszt told me that Irving perfectly realised his ideal of Goethe's Mephisto ; that he had seen every German actor of renown who had impersonated the part for the last sixty years, not one of whom equalled Irving in conception or interpretation of the "business" incumbent on a human representative of the Tempting Fiend ; that no attempt had ever been made in the Fatherland, except at Hanover, to mount and play the Brocken scene with anything like the weird grandeur and artistic finish characterising the Lyceum production. Irving, towards the close of the feast, addressed us with touching eloquence upon the subject of his venerable guest, "whose genius commanded our reverent admiration, whilst his loving-kindness and tender humanity had won our hearts." "He is leaving us," Irving continued, "carrying with him to other lands our love, as well as our respect ; for this great and good man, above all else, has loved his fellow-men, and lavishly applied the superb gifts with which God has endowed him to alleviating human suffering and allaying human distress. By his talents he has added ineffable pleasures to the life-experiences of civilised mankind ; by his inexhaustible charity he has shed light upon the darkness of numberless sorrowful existences. Blessings follow him whithersoever he may go ; the blessings of the poor, which shall avail. Let us bid him God speed, and tell him that we shall never forget the joy his presence has been to us." That Irving's guests responded fervently to this moving appeal goes without saying. The Master rose, and eagerly returned our greetings ; but emotion prevented him from replying to his host in words, and he sat down again amidst a polyglotic clamour of "Hurrah!" "Eljen!" "Hoch soll der Meister leben!" and "Vive le grand Maître!" At about one a.m. Liszt retired, but the party did not break up until a much later hour, the lingerers being regaled with Herr Stavenhagen's fine playing of several works by the hero of the evening, who, as he told me more than once, had enjoyed the entertainment, dramatic and social, offered to him "with no less gratitude than gratification."

As a propagandist of the Wagnerian dogma, and an exponent of the Wagnerian poetico-dramatico-musical theory, Mr. Carl Armbruster is specially qualified to achieve success. His lectures are terse, lucid, and to the point; his delivery is unexceptionable; and the instrumental and vocal illustrations with which he exemplifies the peculiarities of the Saxon Master's method are alike well chosen and admirably executed. I was one of his auditors the other night at the Birkbeck Institute, when he discoursed most eloquently and entertainingly upon the leading characteristics of Wagnerian opera, as contrasted with those of the operatic works composed by Wagner's predecessors and contemporaries; laying stress on the unity of purpose and freedom from the restraints of tradition that pervade these monumental products of creative genius. That Wagner aimed at achieving an artistic trinity in unity, by making the words, music, and dramatic action of his operas so supremely suitable to one another that they became practically identical, all musicians are well aware; and few of the present generation will deny that, in a great measure, he attained his object. His was a new departure in operatic composition. No great masters before him had constructed the plots, or written the libretti of opera. Mozart, and even more notoriously Weber, had set worthless "books" to divine music; Bellini, Donizetti, Rossini, Verdi, Meyerbeer, had all been dependent for the texts of their operas upon literary hacks, more or less liberally endowed with a mechanical aptitude for stringing together verses that would scan, and that were easily to be fitted to musical phrases. As Mr. Armbruster aptly pointed out to his audience, none of the incongruities that passed current with the musical public when Italian opera held the lyric stage throughout Europe are to be found in Wagner's tone-dramas; no words expressive of despair, caroled in waltz-time, or cheerful sentiments chanted in penitential strains. If the *motivi* depicting rage or jealousy lack musical beauty, it is because rage and jealousy are ugly passions, that cannot be fitly depicted in sound by sweet melodies and pleasing harmonies. They are elements, however, of dramatic story, and must be appropriately expressed; hence certain Wagnerian episodes, like that of Telramund and Elsa in the second act of "Lohengrin," which may distress the ears of some, but are satisfactory to the intelligence of all. As the German Chancellor once said to me:—"There are no tunes in 'Tristan and Isolde' which one can whistle as one strolls homewards from the Opera House;" but, on the other hand, every bar of that colossal work—admitted by Wagner himself to be the most complete exponence of his theory of operatic composition—musically exemplifies, or endeavours to exemplify, the text, the dramatic situations, and the phases of passion through which the characters of the play are passing. To revert to Mr. Armbruster's lecture, I may observe that it was listened to attentively and gratefully by a numerous audience, which, like myself, was very favourably impressed by the magnificent voice and vigorous dramatic delivery of Miss Cramer, a young German soprano singer who has lately made her *début* in London, and with conspicuous success. Mr. Hirwen Jones sang several excerpts from the *rôles* of Lohengrin and Walther with excellent taste and effect.

Concerts were numerous, and, here and there, interesting during the past month. Amongst those more especially worthy of retrospective mention were Mdlle. de Lido's *matinée*, at 1, Onslow Gardens, on the 12th ult., at which the gifted *bénéficiaire* delighted a numerous audience (chiefly consisting of *grandes dames de par le monde*) by several displays of highly-finished vocalisation, whilst her accomplished sister, the Countess Sadowska de Scharfenort, won abundant plaudits by her dramatic rendering of the grand scena from "Une Nuit de Cléopatre," and by the recitation, no less forcible than pathetic, of a poem entitled "Three Mothers," originally published in THE THEATRE. Miss Amy Sherwin and Mr. Arthur Oswald, with their spirited and musicianly singing, contributed materially to the pleasure afforded by an exceptionally meritorious entertainment, further supported by those accomplished artistes MM. Lasserre, Buziau, and Coenen, and Mr. Hirwen Jones. On the 13th Mr. Isidore de Lara gave his third Spring Recital at Steinway Hall, which proved too small to contain the crowd of fashionable persons that vainly endeavoured to find sitting and standing room within its precincts. The programme was, as usual, an attractive and well chosen one, including several of Mr. De Lara's charming songs, a new ballad by Paolo Tosti, hight "Yesterday" and possessing indefeasible claims to popularity, Mrs. Moncrieff's graceful "Serenade," a leash of delightful French chansons, and two clever recitations by Mrs. and Mr. Barrymore. The concert-giver had quite surmounted all the bronchial troubles to which intemperate March had subjected him, and was in excellent voice; he sang to perfection, and was inimitably accompanied in several of the more important numbers of his recital by Signor Paolo Tosti, whose delicious "Aprile," by the way, elicited a storm of applause from the extremely sympathetic audience.]

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Herr Stavenhagen—speaking of whom, Liszt said to me "He is the best pupil I have taught for some years past, and will presently take a distinguished place in the foremost rank of masterly pianists"—gave a P.F. recital at Prince's Hall on the 16th ult., in the course of which he played nine of his great master's compositions, to the perfect contentment of a numerous and musical audience. Dr. Liszt was present. In my opinion young Stavenhagen fully justifies the praise bestowed upon him by the chief authority living, as far as pianism is concerned. His execution is faultless, and he teems with musical intelligence of a high order. On the occasion referred to he had the advantage of playing upon a superb instrument, one of Bechstein's *chef-d'œuvres*, a sister piano to the one placed in Dr. Liszt's study at Sydenham for his especial use in composition. For the last thirty years, indeed, Liszt has maintained his preference for the Bechstein pianoforte, which he invariably signalises as "perfect, and affording the *virtuoso* the amplest opportunities for displaying his own powers and the resources of clavichord—in a word, everything to praise and nothing to find fault with." It was on a piano of this category that Stavenhagen played two of Liszt's famous studies after Paganini, and his noble arrangement of the Huguenots with a skill

that could scarcely be surpassed. On the 19th ult. Prince's Hall was thronged by one of the most fashionable audiences ever gathered together within its walls. The occasion was Countess Sadowska's "Farewell to Liszt" concert, at which the Master made his last public appearance in London before quitting England, and the programme consisted exclusively of selections from his earlier vocal and instrumental works. Madame de Sadowska, who was efficiently supported by her sister, Mdlle. De Lido, Mr. Hirwen Jones, Mr. Arthur Oswald, MM. Coenen, Romili, Buziau, and other well-known executants, read a valedictory address to Liszt, in verse, which will be found in another portion of this periodical. Space pressure debars me from commenting on the details of this interesting entertainment; suffice it to say that some of its numbers were ably rendered, and that it went off from first to last with great spirit and *éclat*. The reception accorded to Dr. Liszt by all present was no less enthusiastic than that which greeted him at the "St. Elisabeth" rehearsal, just a fortnight earlier, and will, as he himself observed, be gratefully remembered by him to the end of his days.

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Amongst the new musical publications that reached me last month were the following vocal and instrumental pieces. (Messrs. Chappell and Co.)—"The Sandman," a really charming song by J. L. Molloy, who has set Mr. Weatherly's sympathetic words with kindred tenderness and grace. Concert singers of the contralto persuasion should add "The Sandman" to their stock *répertoire*. It will do great execution in the provinces. To Mr. De Lara's latest novelties, "All my All" and "Marion," I briefly referred when they were still in MS. They are both conceived in a lighter, livelier vein than the majority of this genial composer's songs. "All my All" is written altogether in the playful and coquettish spirit of May Probyn's delightful words; "Marion," to judge by her dainty setting, must be an uncommonly attractive person—I should like to "ride in a brougham" with her myself. See Whyte Melville's words. "One or Two," the joint production of Will Carleton and Frances Allitsen, does not impress me very favourably. The words are thin, and the music is thinner. Why it should be signed by the person to whom it is dedicated I fail to understand. A "Chanson Russe," by Er Sturmels, is melodious, showy, and easy to play—within the executive range of the probationary drawing-room pianiste, and free from offence to those whom politeness compels to listen to her. Not so a P.F. "sketch" called "On the Clyde," by Wm. Smallwood, which is sheer rubbish; one marvels to see the name of a first-class publishing firm printed on its title-page. "Night and Morn" (Bucalossi) is a pretty and infectious "vocal waltz" (!) familiar to the *habitués* of Drury Lane, and "Cherry Ripe" (Delbrück) is a polka *comme un autre*, quite good enough to dance to.—(Boosey and Co.)—Mrs. Lynedoch Moncrieff's new song, "Oh! Abyssinian Tree," may safely be pronounced the best of all this clever composer's works that have heretofore appeared in type. It is a singularly happy setting of Moore's beautiful words, and, intelligently rendered by any possessor of a rich contralto voice, cannot fail to gratify a musical

audience ; being, however, perhaps a thought too grave, as well as too good, to achieve popularity.—(London Music Publishing Company).—Mr. Gerard Cobb's P.F. suite of six numbers, like all this composer's works, is melodious, thoughtful, and musicianly. None of its episodes presents any formidable difficulty of *technique* for the *dilettante* to grapple with and be overcome by ; they are all pleasant playing for well-trained fingers. Of some vocal and instrumental abominations forwarded to me for review I will say nothing. May their composers and publishers be forgiven !

WM. BEATTY-KINGSTON.



## Our Play-Box.

### "THE SCHOOLMISTRESS."

An original farce in three acts, by A. W. PINERO.

Produced at the Court Theatre, on Saturday, March 27, 1886.

The Hon. Vere Quekett ...	MR. ARTHUR CECIL.	Jaffray ... ...	MR. LUGG.
Rear-Admiral Archibald Rankling, C.B. ...	MR. JOHN CLAYTON.	Mrs. Rankling ... ...	MISS EMILY CROSS.
Lieut. John Mallory ...	MR. F. KERR.	Miss Dyott ... ...	MRS. JOHN WOOD.
Mr. Saunders ...	MR. EDWIN VICTOR.	Dinah ... ...	MISS CUDMORE.
Mr. Reginald Paulover ...	MR. H. EVERSFIELD.	Gwendoline Hawkins ...	MISS VINEY.
Mr. Otto Bernstein ...	MR. CUREVALIER.	Ermyntrude Johnson ...	MISS LA COSTE.
Tyler ... ... ...	MR. W. PHILLIPS.	Peggy Hesslerigge ...	MISS NORREYS.
Goff ... ... ...	MR. FRED CAPE.	Jane Chipman ...	MISS ROCHE.

Mr. Pinero must have felt that he had handicapped himself very severely by writing "The Magistrate," when he sat down to plan out "The Schoolmistress"; and it says much for his skill as a play-wright that he has been able to follow a triumph by a success. At the same time, as he himself would probably be ready to admit, the latter is by no means so good a piece as the former, the construction is distinctly weaker, and the improbabilities are glaring even for farce. The beauty of "The Magistrate" was the "sweet reasonableness" of the comic situations, which all might have happened; but in this play, if you once ask yourself whether what occurs could ever have been within the bounds of possibility you are lost. Mr. Pinero has gone as far as any farce-writer can in the way of "high-jinks," but, at the same time, one would advise no less-experienced author to imitate such a venturesome experiment; or, at all events, not until he can write such dialogue as is here given us. For the dramatist, conscious it may be of the weakness and improbability of his fable, has embroidered on it such a wealth of witticisms as has rarely been found in one play. More genuinely comic dialogue has scarcely been heard on the stage, and there are "wheezes" enough, in theatrical parlance, to make the fortune of a couple of pieces. The best jokes, it must be added, are a good deal in the style of Mr. Gilbert, but Mr. Pinero has proved himself an apt scholar, and never has more continuous laughter been heard throughout the whole of a piece, nor been so thoroughly well deserved.

A brief outline of the story will suffice, for it is not the plot that makes

the success of "The Schoolmistress." Miss Dyott is the head of a select ladies' school, who has somewhat rashly married an impecunious "swell," the Hon. Vere Queckett, and finds him rather an expensive luxury. In order to supply him with the little enjoyments he needs, this lady takes an engagement as *prima donna* in a comic opera during the Christmas holidays, and, oddly enough, leaves Queckett to keep house for the few boarders who remain during the holidays. Then several remarkable incidents occur with truly startling rapidity. First, Mr. Queckett determines to give a bachelor party at the house, and secondly, that resolve being detected by a governess-pupil and the other young ladies, who are also going to give a party, he is made to preside over a combined feast. Nor is this all Mr. Pinero has in store for us. To this extraordinary banquet come not only the young husband of a girlish bride, who is still a pupil at the school, but positively also her father, Admiral Rankling, a friend of Queckett's, who has been away for some years at sea, and does not recognise his daughter, while he is the object of frantic jealousy on the part of her husband. Of the fast and furious fun of this veritably "mad tea-party," it is needless to speak, though it includes a very humorous oration by the admiral, and a riotous dance; but it is summarily stopped by an alarm of fire, and all the characters save Queckett escape by the window, aided by comic firemen, just as Miss Dyott, who has been summoned from the theatre, appears upon the scene in full stage costume. It must be said that the conclusion of this second act is the least satisfactory part of the clever piece, and so ingenious a dramatist as Mr. Pinero could surely have brought his characters together at the Admiral's, as he does in the next act, without having recourse to so wild and pantomimic an expedient. In the last act Mr. Pinero, while gathering up the threads of his plot, continues to provide ample amusement for the audience. We see the Admiral's leonine, or, one should rather in the case of a sailor say, cetacean, rage against Queckett for deceiving him, and we roar sympathetically with the latter when he avows his intention of commencing a mortal combat with the Admiral by lying down. We see how Mrs. Rankling, egged on by Miss Dyott, turns on her ferocious husband; how Queckett has a very bad time of it; how the young bride and bridegroom win pardon; and how the governess-pupil gains a husband. All this, and more than this, does Mr. Pinero shows us amid a perfect fusillade of witticisms, and leaves his audience so exhausted with laughter that the critical faculty is entirely suspended in anxiety for the condition of their zygomatic muscles. Certainly a merry piece "The Schoolmistress," somewhat thin in plot, and weak in construction, but brilliantly written, and most amusing.

The farce was capitally acted. Mr. Arthur Cecil in the Hon. Vere Queckett had a part which exactly suited him. Mr. Cecil's method is remarkable for finish rather than breadth, indeed, having an occasional tendency to over-elaboration; but in this case every little touch told, and the impersonation was a thoroughly delightful bit of work. A capital contrast was afforded by Mr. Clayton's Admiral Rankling, a most humorous embodiment of a rough old sea-dog, with a glaring eye and terrific voice,

rendered raucous by rum and bad weather. As Miss Dyott, or rather Mrs. Queckett, Mrs. John Wood was, as indeed she always is, inimitable. She caught the tone of the *prima donna* of comic opera with greater accuracy, as may readily be imagined, than that of the mistress of a school for young ladies, and a little bit of a *scena* delivered in the last act was one of the hits of the piece. A good deal of the work in the play falls to Miss Norreys, as the articed pupil, and she played with much spirit. She wanted experience, however, and, while evidently feeling her part, has not at present the art of communicating her high spirits to the audience ; she hardly seemed to get *en rapport* with them ; but, at the same time, there was a weird impishness about her that was decidedly effective. Miss Emily Cross played neatly as Mrs. Rankling ; Mr. Kerr was a most satisfactory Lieutenant Mallory ; and Mr. Edwin Victor a delightful "Midshipmite." Other characters were well sustained, and calls for all concerned brought a very pleasant entertainment to a conclusion. Everyone should see "The Schoolmistress."

H. SAVILE CLARKE.

### "JIM THE PENMAN."

A "Romance of Modern Society," in Four Acts, by Sir CHARLES L. YOUNG, Bart.

Produced at the Haymarket Theatre on Saturday, April 3, 1886.

James Ralston ... ...	MR. ARTHUR DACRE.	Mr. Netherby, M.P....	MR. ULLICK WINTER.
Louis Percival ... ...	MR. BARRYMORE.	Dr. Pettywise ... ...	MR. P. BEN GREET.
Baron Hartfield ... ...	MR. H. BEERBOHM-TREE.	Butler ... ... ...	MR. BASIL WEST.
Captain Redwood ... ...	MR. CHARLES BROOKFIELD.	Agnes Ralston ... ...	MISS HELEN LEYTON.
Lord Drelincourt ... ...	MR. EDMUND MAURICE.	Lady Duncombe ... ...	MISS HENRIETTA LINDLEY.
George Ralston ... ...	MR. FRANK RODNEY.	Mrs. Chapstone ... ...	MRS. E. H. BROOKE.
Mr. Chapstone, Q.C... ...	MR. FORBES DAWSON.	Mrs. Ralston ... ...	LADY MONCKTON.

In the face of the sad lamentations issuing from certain quarters on the dearth of modern English dramatists, such a play as "Jim the Penman" should be welcomed. Sir Charles Young is no novice in stagecraft, and he has given us an excellent piece of workmanship ; an interesting story, cleverly woven into the scenes of a well-constructed play. "Jim the Penman" is not a play with a purpose ; nor is it a deep analysis of character likely to make us reflect at length on some particular side of human nature which had but lightly impressed us before. It simply, but thoroughly, justifies the author's own description—"A romance of modern society." It is a page torn from the book of every-day life—one of its dark days, with clouds and thunder foreshadowing the impending storm. The author does not take us by surprise ; from the first we are taken into his confidence, but so well is the story told that we listen to him with rapt attention unto the very end, though we guess what is coming. There is no "filling up" in his narration ; not only the interest does not flag, but, better still, it is progressive, and the last act is, as it should be, the culminating point.

The story runs thus : James Ralston, a wealthy philanthropist, moving in the best society, and on the eve of becoming an M.P., is known by everyone to be *something* in the City ; but even his wife—a clever, charming woman—is kept in ignorance as to his business and

the real source of his fortune. They appear to be a happy couple. Their daughter is engaged to Lord Drelincourt, a young man who realises all that the girl and parents could wish for, as lover and son-in-law ; their son, a good-natured, impulsive boy, adores his mother ; all seems bright and smiling, but for this little shadow of want of confidence between husband and wife. Long habit, however, has taught Mrs. Ralston not to insist on this point, nor to give it much thought.

The play opens at the close of a dinner-party at the Ralstons. From some hints thrown out by the family doctor, we learn that the master of the house is in a precarious state of health, but this also he has studiously kept to himself. At the very outset of the story, a little incident occurs that is all-important ; it is the slow-match applied to the mine, which is to shatter all in the end. On being asked to subscribe to some charity, Ralston takes up his wife's cheque-book, and asks her *if he may sign her name to a cheque*, she answering "*of course*." No doubt Mrs. Ralston takes his meaning to be that he will sign his name to the cheque *for* her, not that he is about to imitate her signature, else her answer would be rather startling ; he does so, however, little thinking at the time that he is signing away his wife's faith and trust in him. If Ralston had said, "*May I use one of your cheques?*" the incident would have lost its look of improbability, and the aim of the author would have been equally well attained. Two unexpected visitors appear on the scene. One of the guests having asked leave to bring a friend in the evening, this friend turns out to be no other than one Louis Percival, an old schoolfellow of James Ralston, and an old playmate and lover of Mrs. Ralston. These two had been engaged in former days, but the engagement had been broken off, and Percival had gone to America. He has just returned after many years of absence, and they now meet again—he with suppressed emotion, she with friendly but studied indifference. Through life, Percival has been a sad victim to fate ; having lost the woman he loved, he has been robbed of the large fortune he amassed in America by a forged cheque, drawing out the whole amount from the bank at one sweep. He is relating this part of his story when he is interrupted by a certain Captain Redwood, who is strangely given to falling asleep at odd moments, slipping off his chair and breaking some china. The second visitor is a Baron Hartfeld, who is introduced as a business acquaintance of Ralston, his appearance being evidently highly distasteful to the latter. When the other guests have retired and these two are left alone, we at once learn the cause of this, and the mystery of James Ralston's life. A fatal gift—a facility for imitating handwriting—has, step by step, led him from crime to crime. This man, respected by all, owes his wealth to numberless forgeries ; in fact, he is no other than the notorious "Jim the Penman," whose identity the police have hitherto failed to trace. He is connected with an association of swindlers who live by his pen. The game is getting dangerous,

and the Baron, one of the chief members of the association, has come to propose a last stroke of business, after which the partnership will be dissolved. Ralston, on hearing that he is expected to forge an order to draw the Drelincourt diamonds (worth an enormous amount) out of the bank, at first refuses ; but, pressed by the Baron, and with the thought that after this he will be able to bury the past, he yields. His worldly position is, to him, dearer than life, and he will do anything to retain it. "Oh ! that I might live as other men !" is his great cry. New discoveries are unfolded to us as the story proceeds. The day after the party Percival calls on Mrs. Ralston ; she alludes to his wife, and, finding that he has remained single all these years, her astonishment leads to an explanation, when they discover that they have both been duped into thinking the other had broken off the engagement, and they have been severed by means of two letters forged in their own handwriting. Mrs. Ralston vows she will keep both letters until she can trace the author. Nemesis is on the track of Jim the Penman. The diamonds are already in the possession of the Baron, but Lord Drelincourt, anxious to show them to his *fiancée*, has gone to the bank and discovered the robbery ; and, a description of the jewels, with a reward offered for their recovery, being published at once, the immediate disposing of them becomes impossible. On hearing Drelincourt has gone for the diamonds, Ralston half swoons on the sofa, exclaiming "my heart," and thus his wife learns for the first time that he is suffering from heart disease. Percival is still present at the time, and Captain Redwood has also called. Anxious that this incident should not be dwelt upon, Ralston asks Percival to proceed with his story, interrupted on the previous night, as to the cause of his crossing the Atlantic. The latter then explains that it was at the bidding of a London firm of private detectives, who have at last traced the forger who ruined him. Captain Redwood has again tried to interrupt him, though uselessly this time, and we learn from an aside, what we have already guessed, that the Captain's power of observation and social opportunities are at the service of the firm of detectives mentioned by Percival. After this, the Ralstons leave London for their country seat ; he is busying himself about his election, and the marriage of the young people is about to take place. Ralston is nervous and depressed ; anxious about his health, his wife questions him, but is only answered by an irritable denial that anything is wrong or weighing on his mind. The Baron has followed them, a self-invited guest. Captain Redwood has also—accidentally, he says—come to stay in the neighbourhood. There we have one of the most powerful scenes in the play. Mrs. Ralston, on examining her pass-book, fails to remember having signed a certain cheque for five pounds ; her husband recalls to her the circumstances of the dinner-party, when she gave him leave to sign a cheque in her name. At first, Mrs. Ralston's feeling is only one of astonishment at her signature being so perfectly imitated ; then gradually a terrible

thought dawns upon her ; she draws out the letter purported to have been written by her to Percival to break off the engagement, and compares it with the cheque. The fearful truth then forces itself upon her—it is her husband who had written those letters. In a fury of indignation she turns upon him and upbraids him ; the son and daughter are seen approaching in the garden, as she exclaims, "I am no longer your wife." "But you are the mother of my children," he answers ; "will you tell them?" She casts a look of despair towards the advancing couple, and sinking on a chair, "I can't ! I can't !" are the words wrung from her heart. And the curtain comes down on one of the strongest situations ever found in modern drama.

We are now nearing the end. This is the wedding day, and Percival is one of the guests. He has meanwhile learned, from Redwood, that the man who ruined him was no other than his old school-fellow ; but as his case is the only one in which Jim the Penman can be convicted, he has refused to prosecute, that the shame may not fall on the woman he has loved so well, and on her innocent children. Ralston and the Baron have overheard this, and therefore feel safe in that quarter. Percival has only come at the earnest request of Mrs. Ralston, for she wishes to reveal to him the name of the author of the forged letters. Misunderstanding her, and thinking she now knows all, Percival, unknowingly, is the first to apprise her of the terrible fact that her husband and Jim the Penman are one. This scene is not altogether to be commended. Had Percival been in the house at the time when the injured woman learned that it was her husband who had forged the letter which had "wrecked her life," her disclosing the fact to Percival would be very natural, and who would have the heart to blame her ? But would she send for him in view to this revelation after some days had passed, anxious as she is to keep the knowledge from her children, and remembering that Percival has sworn to show the man no mercy when he found him. A very powerful scene between husband and wife follows, in which she upbraids him on having made her live on the price of his infamy. "Restitution to the last farthing," she cries ; but here a very fine scene is spoilt by her adding "And confess to the world who you are!" Are we given to understand that she would herself denounce her husband, and send him to penal servitude ? This would be both untrue and unwomanly. During her long married life she and her husband have lived on friendly terms, and however much she may hate him now, she would not be the one to hand him over to justice. The last scene of all is wrought with great intensity. The Baron, mingling persuasion and threats, forces his accomplice's consent to give him a large sum in exchange for the stolen diamonds, which Ralston will be supposed to have recovered through the reward offered. But meanwhile, Redwood has found and possessed himself of them, and appears on the scene, casket in hand. With sudden

audacity, James Ralston hands to Redwood the promised reward doubled, and bids him go and present the bride and bridegroom with the jewels. But when the two accomplices are once more alone, the foiled Baron, white with suppressed rage, throws himself like a wild beast on Ralston, to possess himself of the remaining notes in his pocket-book. The shock of the struggle is too much for Ralston, who dies of heart disease while the wedding breakfast is taking place. And so ends the story of the unrelenting downfall of a man raised to a high pinnacle by crime. The name of "Jim the Penman" is not a creation of the author's brain, but belonged to a notorious forger many years ago. The four acts of this story—one that is terribly, sadly true, for the sins of this man not only bring retribution on himself, but suffering and misery on his surroundings—are well worked up. The scenes are extremely well put together, and, with the exceptions I have mentioned, are brought about in a natural and consistent manner. I have only given the outline of the plot, but the details are good, and cleverly woven into the main story.

The principal character is a difficult one, owing to the great contrasts in it. James Ralston is a combination of resolution, audacity, and weakness, a character which would be looked upon as inconsistent were it not for the terrible disease which undermines the physical strength of the man, and consequently affects his moral strength. Mr. Arthur Dacre acts very well in this rôle, but these contrasts are at times very trying to him, and in several instances he lacks sufficient power to raise the impersonation to the height it might attain. His death scene is extremely well realised. Still more difficult is the part of Mrs. Ralston, and Lady Monckton does wonders with it. She shows intelligence, power, and intensity of feeling rarely met with. Where she fails is where pathos is required, and therefore her scene with her daughter in the last act is the least successful. But no living actress could excel her in the dumb scene, when she compares the letter and the cheque; the pause is one of unusual length on the stage, and the various feelings which take place within her are reflected in the expression of her face with admirable artistic skill. Seldom has an actress had such a difficult task set her, and she comes through the ordeal triumphantly. Mr. Maurice Barrymore, who now takes the part of Louis Percival, is the right man in the right place. He gives both dignity and earnestness to the character. Mr. Beerbohm-Tree as the Baron is not made up with his usual skill; it is rather overdone. His best opportunity for acting comes in the last act, and he makes the most of it; the rage of the foiled scoundrel is powerfully and artistically depicted. Mr. Charles Brookfield has done nothing better than Captain Redwood; it is a most finished performance. The small parts are in good hands, all helping to the general excellence, Miss Henrietta Lindley and Mr. Frank Rodney deserving a special word of praise.

"Jim the Penman" will no doubt continue to draw good houses;

an interesting, well-written, and well-acted play cannot but follow up the success it has already achieved.

MARIE DE MENSIAUX.

### “SOPHIA.”

A Four-Act Comedy, adapted by ROBERT BUCHANAN from Fielding's Novel, “Tom Jones.”

Produced at the Vaudeville Theatre on Monday afternoon, April 12, 1886.

Tom Jones	...	...	MR. CHARLES GLENNEY.	Honour	...	...	MISS LOTTIE VENNE.
Mr. Allworthy	...	...	MR. GILBERT FARQUHAR.	Susan	...	...	MISS LOUISA PEACH.
Blifil	...	...	MR. ROYCE CARLETON.	Molly Seagrim	...	...	MISS HELEN FORSYTH.
Square	...	...	MR. H. AKHURST.	Lady Bellaston	...	...	MISS ROSE LECLERCQ.
Squire Western	...	...	MR. FRED. THORNE.	Thicket	...	...	MR. COURTNEY.
George Seagrim	...	...	MR. FULLER MELLISH.	Jim	...	...	MR. JOHNSON.
Copse	...	...	MR. J. WHEATMAN.	Page	...	...	MASTER OLLETT.
Partridge	...	...	MR. THOMAS THORNE.	Matt	...	...	MR. A. AUSTIN.
Sophia	...	...	MISS KATE RORKE.	Footman	...	...	MR. CAMPBELL.
Miss Western	...	...	Miss SOPHIE LARKIN.	Lady Bellaston's Maid	...	...	MISS BRITTAINE.

A crowded, not to say crammed, house greeted Mr. Buchanan's version of “Tom Jones” at the Vaudeville, brought forward at a morning performance. This seems to have excited a certain amount of ingenious speculation, though the truth is it has been constantly done at this house—an ingeniously tentative mode of experimenting on an audience. The acting on this occasion was full of spirit and liveliness, and the distinct freshness of the characters gave unbounded satisfaction. It was curious to note the suggestions here for “The School for Scandal,” it being clear that Sheridan drew the characters of the two Surfaces from Blifil and Tom. It is not, however, so well known that the famous and ever-effective “screen scene” was taken from the same source, the screen being the old curtain, which fell so awkwardly and discovered the Tutor in Molly Seagrim's room. Even the culprit's protest on his detection is in the form of Joseph's “Notwithstanding, Sir Peter, all that has passed,” &c. The amazingly light touch of Sheridan, his fashion of abstracting the very essence of a character, is happily shown by contrast with this work of Mr. Buchanan, who, at least, cannot be blamed for lacking the genius of the gifted Brinsley. Indeed, the modern system of bringing out details of a character is invariably to make every sentence illustrate the character as the hypocrite may only deliver hypocritical sentiments, &c., whereas, as we learn from Shakespeare, a colourless or indifferent line is often as appropriate.

As this is a momentous occasion—somewhat awe-inspiring—with allusions to our “great English novelist, &c.,” our adaptor must of course be moved to issue proclamation of motives—humility, and so forth—a foolish custom. No one pays the least attention to such things, or is propitiated, convinced, or in any wise affected thereby. Nay, it provokes a certain amount of irreverence, not to say ridicule; for it needs no self-disclaimer to know that the adaptor is not of the same quality as his subject. Of this we may be assured, that the humble translator is responsible for blemishes, whereas all the merits are those of “our eminent English novelist.” But all these addresses to the public, proclamations, &c., are but the distention of self-complacency, and should be abolished.

The character of Blifil was "laid" in broad colours of villainy. He was blacked all over, and nothing was left to the imagination. The part was well played, however, by one who is "new to the town"—to use the old archaic phrase—and one whom the town is likely to appreciate. Sophia was charmingly rendered by Miss Rorke, with a pleasant, spontaneous freshness which won her audience. Mr. Glenny, who appeared as Tom, was equally animated, and had an old-comedy air and manner, suggesting one of the characters in poor Caldecott's illustrations to "Bracebridge Hall." The manager, Mr. Thorne, contented himself with the rather modest character of Partridge, the barber, into which he infused an amount of subdued pathos commingled with humour. But he has ever a quaint, affected simplicity that lends itself to the tone of these characters of old comedy. Still, it may be doubted if this excellent player has latterly—since his Graves in "Money"—been fitted with a really *large* and satisfactory character, such as would give full scope to his talents—Crummles, in "Nickleby," would suit him well. Miss Leclercq, as Lady Bellaston, illustrated the "grand style" and majestic air of *distinction* which is so often lacking in modern players. She was the great "dame" all over, rustling in her silks and furbelows. Praise, too, must be given to Miss Forsyth for her rustic maiden. After all, why was not the play named "Tom Jones"—*tout bonnement*?

PERCY FITZGERALD.



## Our Omnibus-Box.

A writer in "The Saturday Review" gives his reasons for considering that no dramatic critic should be a dramatic author. But there are two sides to every question, and to deny to the critic the value of practical experience in the art he discusses is to disregard the candid opinion of an expert. It is curious that "The Saturday Review" should hunt the old hare, for this very paper was instituted for encouraging exactly the same system in journalism that its editor condemns in regard to one of the fine arts. In the early days of "The Saturday Review" the writers were selected by its first editor, John Douglas Cook, to review the books on subjects with which they were most familiar. Thus the poet was asked to review the poet's book, the novelist tackled the last new work of fiction, the traveller discussed the last volume of adventure, the barrister was told off to handle the last law book, and so on. John Oxenford was selected to write about the drama, because not only had he written plays, but because he knew more about dramatic literature than most men of his time. James Davison was the first musical critic of "The Saturday Review," because he was a writer and an executant. It would surprise me very much if exactly the same system were not pursued on "The

"Saturday Review" to this very day. Gosse, Lang, Saintsbury, Pollock, Alfred Watson, and many others, are not discarded as reviewers because they write books. It is because they write books that they are able to review them.

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Surely the opinion of an expert has some value in connection with the drama, as with the other arts. A painter who has gone through the drudgery of his art and become practically acquainted with the difficulty of it, and who can express his views on painting on paper, is not on that account the worst critic that could be selected. John Ruskin is not to be despised because he can paint and draw. A musician who is an executant and composer, who at the same time can write, is surely more competent to criticise than one who does not know one note from another. There is scarcely a musical critic of any value on the Press who is professedly ignorant of the technical part of the art he discusses, or who does not vary the duties of criticism with the pleasure of composition.

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Why, then, should not the same rule apply to the drama? Human nature is not so bad nor is moral sense so low as "young authors" and spiteful editors of theatrical journals would imply. Our hands are not all at our neighbours' throats. We are not all eaten up with spleen because our neighbours succeed. There is room enough in the world for more than one dramatist, author, critic, journalist, or what not. The writer who would use a position of influence to abuse it would soon be discovered and deposed from his post. The fierce light of notoriety beats upon every word he utters, every action he commits. He can respect the feeling of others as well as his own, and is well aware of the responsibility entrusted to him by such as bestow on him their confidence. Is it not possible that a critic, when he has written a play, when he has had practical experience of the stage, when he has attended rehearsals, when he has studied from top to bottom the mechanical part of the actor's art, becomes more lenient to their failures and shortcomings? A man who has never rehearsed a play or opera, or seen one rehearsed, has no idea of the difficulties that beset the actor's calling. The critic who has studied all this, who "knows the ropes," is inclined to be more encouraging than severe. It is the ignoramus who slashes, the man of experience who deals gently with failure, and encourages talent in the land. Mr. Watson told us the other day that in his early career he was advised by an experienced actor to go on the stage before he attempted to criticise. The same experience is derived from writing a play, and from studying the practical working of the stage.

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Besides, the talented editor of "The Saturday Review" ought to know that the most brilliant essayists who have written on the subject of

the drama were not unknown as dramatic authors. Does he disregard the opinions of Théophile Gautier, Jules Janin, Octave Feuillet, Alexandre Dumas, Jules Claretie, François Coppée, because they have written plays? Would he silence a George Henry Lewes, a John Oxenford, a Tom Taylor, a Blanchard, a Bayle Bernard, or a Stirling Coyne, because they were prolific dramatists? Are the recorded words of Augustin Daly and William Winter invaluable because they are composers of original thought as well as writers of original language? They are one and all experts, and the opinion of an expert is relatively more valuable than that of any young author or young journalist under the sun.

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Consistency is apparently impossible when questions of propriety or impropriety, morality or immorality, niceness or nastiness arise in connection with great dramatic subjects. I should like to ask some of those who are most prominent in their denunciation of the "outrage" in permitting the "Cenci" to be played as it was written by Shelley, whether any of these extremely nice-minded people ever saw, or countenanced, or encouraged others to see Rachel or Sara Bernhardt in "Phédre." Surely the motive of "Phédre" is infinitely more horrible in its detail, more outspoken in its analysis of diseased passion than the "Cenci." In "Phédre" the indulgence in the mind-destroying vice is habitual; in the "Cenci" it is sudden. In "Phédre" it is a self-absorption; in the "Cenci" it is a quick access of revenge. And yet I have seen "Phédre" played by Sara Bernhardt with the full and deliberate countenance of Court and society, of literature and fashion, without a murmur of disapproval being uttered. The question of forbidding "Phédre" never arose, and yet the whole play turns on the horror of an incestuous passion. Among the old text-books of the East-end drama is a very celebrated play, "The Tower of Nesle." It is a translation of the "Tour de Nesle," one of the most popular melodramas that was ever performed in France. It was passed, approved, and licensed in this country, and yet it has for its primary motive an accidental act of incest. This fact has hitherto prevented the revival of the "Tour de Nesle," and it is not surprising that it should be so, for we cannot here cover the grossness of the idea with any elevated thought or beauty of language. The poet and the artist can elevate and enoble any subject just as the clown and the buffoon can degrade them. The naked motive power of "Nadjezda" was shown, because it happened to be a strong, terrible subject feebly handled. Had an artist like Rachel or Sarah Bernhardt handled Nadjezda we should not have heard one word of disgust uttered over the circumstance that in a romantic play a woman is called upon to sacrifice her honour to save her husband's life.

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The name of "Jim the Penman" was given by the police to a notorious forger who for a long time baffled their ingenuity. The criminal was a barrister, and his name was Saward. His deeds are recorded in that interesting publication, the police calendar. I was amused at seeing the



"Oh, I do dearly love a buss from one  
who hath a smooth chin."

SOPHIA.

Helen Forster



other day an extract from a letter written by a well-known solicitor, one of whose family prosecuted Saward. He says : "I was amused at seeing the name of 'Jim the Penman' as the title of a play. He must, I should think, have been dead a long time. He was very ill when he returned from abroad on a ticket of leave, which must be more than fifteen years ago. I then saw him once on his calling to see my late brother, but have seen or heard nothing of him since." It was the casual mention of such a character that gave Sir Charles Young the idea of writing the play that has proved so wonderfully successful at the Haymarket.

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The dearth of young, clever, and powerful actresses has given rise to many a cry of despair. We should be all the more ready, therefore, to encourage and foster talent that is yet in the bud, but promises to blossom eventually. A very remarkable engagement has been played at the Grand Theatre, Islington, recently by Miss Florence West, a young lady who has been touring in the provinces with the plays of Hugh Conway and Comyns Carr. Her performance of Pauline in "Called Back" is a very striking one. It is more than intelligent—it is intense. From a small but supple frame comes a voice of strength, but capable of modulation, and it says something for the power of a young actress when she can hold a Saturday night audience at so large a theatre as the Grand. Her mad scene was singularly vivid, and her power of suddenly rising to a tragic situation remarkable in one so young and so comparatively inexperienced, Miss West is physically well suited to intense and passionate characters. for her face is expressive and her form slim. It is not often that one sees so thorough and powerful a performance as that of Miss West as Pauline, or that of Mr. Lewis Waller as her passionate lover in "Called Back." They have both the right stuff in them, and they do not belong to the namby-pamby school of force reserved that so often means force non-existent. They will both come to the front, for they have vigour and style.

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Another surprising success has been made in the course of the month by Miss Helen Forsyth, the bright, clever, human little Molly Seagrim attached to Mr. Robert Buchanan's "Sophia" at the Vaudeville. Hitherto, Miss Helen Forsyth has only been known as the pretty girl in several Haymarket plays. With a sweet voice and a charmingly refined manner, she has justly been considered one of the best of the modern drawing-room young ladies. She was welcomed, and justly so, in "Dark Days," and at the first performance of "Jim the Penman" she showed how a bright, happy English girl can be naturally and unaffectedly played. But few were prepared for the transformation as Molly Seagrim. Away went the pretty frocks, the fair skin was stained to the tint of a gipsy, and Miss Forsyth appeared to the very life as a country hoyden, loving, ignorant, passionate, unsophisticated, the very picture of a village wench who might have been a poacher's daughter. But Miss Forsyth did not succeed alone as a picture of highly-coloured rusticity. She entered into the heart and spirit of the character. She understood Molly Seagrim, the

tangled weed of the country lanes, soon to be crushed under a strong man's heel. It was a clever performance because we felt there was art in it and not artifice. Directly Miss Forsyth came on the stage the whole attention of the house was directed towards her. She had enlisted the sympathetic attention of her audience, and she held it whenever she was on the stage.

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The new burlesque of "Oliver Grumble" at the Novelty is a spirited, laughable work, and deserving of praise as the initial effort of a new author, Mr. George Dance, who evidently has a keen sense of fun. For those who can appreciate an admirable bit of fooling, this is the very piece. That talented couple, Mr. Willie Edouin and Miss Alice Atherton, are the mainstay of the burlesque, and give clever and highly-diverting performances. Miss Atherton, in particular, is worthy of the highest praise for her sweet, spirited, and winning acting. She has been specially photographed in her character in the burlesque for this number of *THE THEATRE*. Mr. Edouin and Miss Atherton are not the only attractive features in this production, which is also assisted by the clever acting and genuine humour of Mr. Arthur Williams as Grumble, the stately and beautiful presence of Miss Edith Blande as King Charles, the animation of Misses Emily Spiller, Addy Conyers, and Jennie Dawson, and the singing of Miss Florence Dysart.

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Mr. William Archer, the well-known "W. A." of "*The World*," whose portrait appears this month, was born at Perth on September 23, 1856. He was educated at several private schools, both in England and Scotland, and finished his education at Edinburgh University, where he took the degree of M.A. in 1876. While still at college he commenced his career as a journalist by becoming leader-writer to a very enterprising and cleverly-conducted little daily, "*The Edinburgh Evening News*," for which he also wrote dramatic criticisms. He retained his connection with this paper from 1875 to 1878, with the interruption of a visit in 1876-7 to Australia, with which his family is connected, his father having been Agent General for Queensland in this country. In 1877 Mr. Archer, in conjunction with Mr. R. W. Lowe, one of his coadjutors on "*The Edinburgh Evening News*," published "*The Fashionable Tragedian*," a pamphlet upon Mr. Irving, illustrated by Mr. G. R. Halkett, which attracted considerable attention. From May, 1879, to October, 1881, he acted as dramatic critic of the London "*Figaro*," then under the editorship of Mr. James Mortimer. He left the "*Figaro*," to spend a year in Italy and Germany; and in the autumn of 1882 he published his chief critical work, "*English Dramatists of To-Day*." It was followed, in 1883, by an elaborate criticism of Mr. Irving, entitled "*Henry Irving, Actor and Manager: A Critical Study*." Though Mr. Archer stated his position as one of "rational



"It seems so funny  
That it makes me grin."

OLIVER GRUMBLE.

Alice Fisher Brown





"The lyfe so short, the craft so long to lerne."

CHAUCER.

William Archer.



appreciation" of Mr. Irving's powers, his "Critical Study" was looked upon by the ardent admirers of the actor as little short of an outrage; and Mr. Frank Marshall published a counterblast—"A Criticism of a Critic's Criticism: By an Irvingite." In 1883 Mr. Archer was called to the Bar at the Middle Temple, and in March, 1884, he succeeded the late Dutton Cook as dramatic critic of "The World," In addition to his work in "The World," he is largely engaged in general journalistic work, and is a frequent contributor to the reviews and magazines. A collection of his magazine articles, with a preliminary essay designed as a supplement to his "English Dramatists," is shortly to appear under the title of "About the Theatre: Essays and Studies."

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Is it not extraordinary that such a quatrain as this should be published and printed every day in the papers, in order apparently to torture our ears and set our teeth on edge :—

'Twas thought that burlesque's sacred lamp was burnt out,  
But you mustn't believe all you *hear*,  
For Little Jack Sheppard has proved beyond doubt,  
That 'tis still shining brilliantly *here*.

It matters little whether this stanza was composed by Mr. Yardley or Mr. Stephens or Mr. Cunningham Bridgman, or all three, but one of the three surely knows that under no conceivable circumstances could "hear" rhyme with "*here*." What do the three say as an amendment to :—

"It is shining here, still! Never fear!"

Burlesque is not shining at the Gaiety at all, but comic opera; that is all the more reason that Cockney rhymes should be avoided.

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A warm welcome has already been extended to the English version of Gustave Flaubert's "Salammbô," just published by Messrs. Saxon and Co., and there can be but little doubt that further popular success is in store for this masterly tale of love and war, this grand, moving description of the fierce, sensuous love of Mâtho, the Libyan chief, for Salammbô, the daughter of Hamilcar. It is one of the finest romances of the century. This version, the only authorised English translation, by the way, has been admirably rendered from the French by M. French Sheldon, and it is prefaced by a scholarly introduction from the pen of Edward King.

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Although "The Private Secretary" has at last ceased running at the Globe, country audiences do not seem to have yet tired of this piece. There are no less than three companies playing the adaptation of "Der Bibliothekar" in the provinces. I recently chanced to witness the performance of the play at Richmond by Mr. Hawtrey's "C" company, and was struck by the manner in which the audience appreciated the comedy, and the general effectiveness of the repre-

sentation. The latter result was greatly due to the efforts of Mr. Richard Dalton, an experienced and excellent stage-manager, and a capital Mr. Marsland. The Spalding of Mr. A. Whittaker was vastly amusing, and Mr. H. Williams was admirable as Cattermole. The Douglas Cattermole of Mr. F. C. Glover was easy and gentlemanlike, while the Gibson of Mr. F. Tyrell was quite good. A better Miss Ashford than that of Miss Bella Cuthbert could not be desired. Miss Marie Brewer acted uncommonly well as Mrs. Stead; while bright and pretty representatives of the two girls were found in Miss Dunbar and Miss V. Noad.

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I have received the following from an enthusiastic member of the "Shelley Society," who is naturally anxious for the success of the proposed performance of "The Cenci" on May 7:—At last it is decided to give a representation of Shelley's powerful tragedy, and in spite of here and there a discordant critical note, we believe that the decision is one which will be acceptable to all lovers of art, to all who desire to give to the classic drama something of the ascendancy which it has in Germany, where, not the works of Goethe alone, but those of Shakespeare, Schiller, and Lessing appear in regular succession on the stage. Granted that Shelley's "Cenci" be, as Mr. Swinburne has said, "the one great play written in the great manner of Shakespeare's men that our literature has seen since the time of these," it would seem strange that we should have had to wait more than half a century for a public representation, were it not that until Mr. Irving took him by the hand Shakespeare spelt bankruptcy to our theatrical managers, and that even now no attempt seems to be made to produce "King Lear," the acknowledged masterpiece of our great poet.

Guido's portrait, we now know, is not Beatrice Cenci. The Cenci legend has also gone the way of others of equal interest under the critical examination of Signor Bertoletti ("Francesco Cenci e la sua famiglia," Florence, 1877), yet inasmuch as many generations have gazed with tender sympathy upon the portrait in the Palazzo Barberini, and have called up the story which inspired Shelley, it is to the eternal glory of the author of the "Prometheus Unbound" that he should have used these coarse and realistic materials, and have surrounded them with ennobling and elevating thoughts. Who shall say that the character of Beatrice—lovely, girlish, her innocence unsmirched by the vileness of an execrable father, and developed into premature womanhood by her hard, sad life—is not one of the healthiest influences in literature? Incest may be a hideous foundation upon which to build up a tragedy, not more hideous we venture to think than the foundation upon which the great woman singer of our age has built the poem of "Aurora Leigh;" yet the story was there, it had been written and talked of unreservedly, and when used, not in a realistic, but essentially in an idealistic spirit, with none of the grim humour with which Carlyle talks of the "Beelzebub Parent-Lover," in his "Friedrich," but to make vice seem more vicious, purity and truth still

more pure and true. It is impossible not to rejoice that Shelley has selected such a theme, and that his admirers have determined to give it a wider currency.

Analysis of the play we must reserve for another occasion, contenting ourselves here merely by referring to the high credit which is due to the much-abused literary societies—and the new English Goethe Society promises still more in the same direction—in as far as they give actors an opportunity of appearing in dramas for which the public as a whole have scarcely sufficient inclination to tempt a manager to give continuous runs; such plays, we mean as Mr. Browning's "In a Balcony" and "Columbe" "Birthday," and now in Shelley's "Cenci" and "Hellas." These might well be followed by a constant interchange with Molière, Goethes Schiller, Lessing, and, above all, with the less frequently acted of Shakespeare's dramas. And, ultimately, a theatre entirely devoted to classical art would be a very interesting monument to the enthusiasm of literary societies. To Dr. Furnivall shall be all the praise!

The coming performance will take place on the 7th of May, at 2 p.m., at the Grand Theatre, Islington, which was selected, we believe, as being the only building of adequate capacity which was available, but which will serve the additional purpose of showing lovers of the drama from other parts of London what a magnificent theatre the North can boast on the site of the modest Philharmonic, so well known in the days of the "Grand Duchess" and "Genevieve de Brabant." Of course, no money can be taken, the play not having been licensed, and only members of the Shelley Society and their friends can obtain admission. The Hon Sec. is Sydney E. Preston, Esq., 88, Eaton Place, S.W. Membership of the society, includes, we understand, not only tickets for this performance, and for Shelley's "Hellas," in November, but also a number of choicely bound volumes of the poet's works; there can be little doubt that the building will be filled to its utmost capacity, and especially when we mention—and it is not the least important feature—the admirable cast which has been gathered together to do honour to Shelley's tragedy. Mr. Hermann Vezin will perform—how adequately we can all conceive—the part of the Count, insatiable and remorseless. Mr. Leonard S. Outram will undertake the difficult and delicate task of pourtraying Orsino, the loveless lover of Beatrice. Mr. William Farren, junr., will act the friendly Cardinal Camillo. The Countess Lucretia, Cenci's second wife, and Beatrice's step-mother, will be personated by Miss Maud Brennen, and the part of the unfortunate heroine, the sweet and spotless girl around whom so much of the interest of the play centres, will be taken by Miss Alma Murray, who has already won enthusiastic applause by her rendering of the last scene of the tragedy before the London Wagner Society.

With a play so beset with difficulties, failure is possible, even to such artists as these, especially as they have no precedents to guide them; but we do not anticipate failure, and offer our hearty good wishes for the performance on the 7th, at which, by the way, Mr. Robert Browning has promised to be present.

Mr. Alexander Watson's Recital at Steinway Hall, on March 31, proved very interesting and successful. The stage had been most tastefully decorated with screens, flowers, statues, etc., giving it the appearance of a drawing-room, and so disguising the shabbiness so noticeable of late in this Hall. To a gentlemanly bearing Mr. Watson adds the great quality of being perfectly simple and natural in manner and delivery, a quality not so common as one might think. He is earnest in striving to get at the author's true meaning, and generally succeeds in doing so. The present programme contained the following items : "The Charge of the Heavy Brigade," by Tennyson, well rendered ; "Early Rising : An Incident of the Old Coaching Days," by John Pool, slightly altered for recitation, was excellent—it was given with great ease, and not a point lost ; and "Bill Gibbon's Deliverance," by the late Arthur Matthison, was equally good. Next came "The Enchanted Net," by F. E. Smedley ; this piece, which is something in the style of the Ingoldsby Legends, also slightly altered, received very quaint treatment from Mr. Watson, and he showed great feeling in the Dotheboys Hall selection, which closed the first part. "Charles Edward at Versailles," by Aytoun, opened the second part, and Le Fanu's "Shamus O'Brien" followed ; this was good, but hardly spirited enough. "Ferdinando and Elvira" was not quite given in the true Gilbertian vein. But in "The Flight of Little Em'ly" Mr. Watson showed great depth of pathos ; specially good was Peggotty, but the whole scene was good and true. He crowned this very successful recital by an excellent rendering of "Jud Browning's Account of Rubenstein's Piano." It was delivered with much light and shade, and altogether I congratulate Mr. Alexander Watson on the rapid strides he has made since I first mentioned his already very good power of recitation in *THE THEATRE* three years ago.

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The second and third dramatic recital of the series given by Mr. Edward Watts-Russell, at the Westminster Town Hall, came off on April 12 and 19. On each occasion the programme was varied and interesting. Mr. Watts-Russell's repertory is an extensive one, and he seems popular with his audience. He has a good voice, and shows much feeling in his recitation ; but he is rather heavy, given to long pauses, and an occasional hesitation in his delivery. A display of real emotion is very effective in some pieces, if it is under control, not otherwise. Mr. Watts-Russell should strive to master his feelings. In Tennyson's "Guinevere" he gave King Arthur's lines very pathetically, and with tears in his voice ; this was good ; but when, Arthur's speech being concluded, the reciter gave the following bit of simple narrative in the same broken tones the effect was quite spoilt. Sporting pieces, such as "Dream of an Old Meltonian" and "How we Beat the Favourite," seem to waken him into a display of more spirit ; but he lacks sufficient power for "Horatius" or Wolsey's speech in "Henry VIII." His rendering of "Rubinstein"

Piano" is satisfactory, but, as a rule, Mr. Watts-Russell allows his comic pieces to drag. He should try to avoid this, and also a marked tendency to being too lachrymose.

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On April 17, at St. George's Hall, the Owl Dramatic Society gave their services for the benefit of the North London Nursing Association for the Poor. Henry Byron's domestic drama, "Daisy Farm," was given *by desire*, so it was stated. This play, by no means one of the author's best, was, on the whole, well rendered. As Andrew Armstrong, Mr. Frank Hole was a little out of his element; but he did very well, and was free from exaggeration. Mr. Sydney Wallace acted well as Charley Burridge, but in the last he appeared far too happy and comfortable for a man who has just confessed a crime, even though he be forgiven. The Simeon Cole of Mr. Eaton Ferrers was abominable. The assumed voice, preventing a single word from being distinctly heard, the stagey gesture—all, in fact, was exaggerated to the utmost limit. In contrast to this, the small part of George Warriner found a perfect representative in Mr. R. Vincent Hughes; this little bit of character-acting could not have been improved upon. Mr. Arthur W. Hughes, made up to look as much like the late Henry Byron as possible, was well fitted with the part of Mr. Craven; he was cool and incisive, and the undercurrent of good nature was sufficiently indicated. As the tramp, Mr. Sydney Barrett was very good. Miss Harriette Nichols misunderstood the part of Cribbage; her mincing tones and affected manner would have been well suited to a London servant, but were entirely out of place in a rustic maid. Miss Nina Cressy was an excellent Bridget Armstrong; she showed earnestness throughout, and some real power in the last act. The cast included Miss Cissy St. George, Mr. Francis Darnley, Mr. Chas. Thomson, Mr. C. J. Nun, Mr. C. Stevenson, and Mr. C. G. Graves. All were letter perfect, and the performance went off very smoothly. One accident occurred though, and a rather awkward one. The curtain came down unexpectedly in the middle of the scene of "The Lover's Leap," and had to be raised again. This *tableau* is quite superfluous, and the play would be all the better for its being left out.

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Our Melbourne correspondent writes:—"The past two months have not been marked by much change in either the musical or dramatic world. The pantomime of "The Sleeping Beauty" at the Theatre Royal ran until February 19. On the following night Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's last opera, "The Mikado," was presented in the usual complete and effective manner common to all productions at this theatre. Miss Nellie Stewart is the Yum Yum; Mr. Woodfield, Pooh Bah; Mr. Howard Vernon, Ko Ko; and Mr. John Forde, the Mikado. Miss Alice Barnett made her first appearance in this opera as Katisha, and Mr. Alfred Cellier took his seat for the first time in the conductor's comfortable arm-chair on the opening night. Both have

been overwhelmed with praise for their highly-appreciated efforts in their lines. Mr. Geo. Rignold closed his Opera House season by playing "In the Ranks" for one week. On January 29, he benefited in the same drama. He then took his company to Sydney, where "Called Back" was produced at the Theatre Royal, on February 13, and had a good three weeks run. The Company are now on their way to New Zealand. On Saturday, January 20, one of the most dreadfully mismanaged operatic seasons I ever heard of was opened at the Opera House. The initial opera was "Madame L'Archiduc," and the *prima donna* was Lottie Montal, better known as Madame Poressard, who, in her earlier days was known in the old Alhambra. Within a fortnight, Mdlle. Montal was refused admission to the theatre, bailiffs held everything, and a whole host of legal processes were served with charming impartiality and profusion. The Company was re-organised, and "Boccaccio" was revived on February 20, to reduced prices. Miss Annette Ivanova is now the leading soprano; and the opera has done well. "Manteaux Noirs" will be revived to-morrow. Mr. Sidney Grundy's comedy, "The Glass of Fashion," was produced at the Bijou Theatre on January 2, but did not create any stir. "Betsy" was then tried on January 23, with Miss Nina Boucicault in the title rôle, a part she is physically unsuited for. "Dark Days" was produced for the first time on February 6, and attained a fair position in public favour. On February 26, Boucicault's comedy, "Fobidden Fruit," was produced, and is now running. Mr. G. W. Anson made his first appearance in it as Sergeant Buster. He is not unlikely to become popular here. "Hazel Kirke" will be the next piece presented at this house. Theatrical matters in Sydney just now are dull. John F. Sheridan, known as the manager of the "Fun on the Bristol" Company, is playing "Uncle Tom's Cabin" at the Gaiety, while the other houses are mainly engaged in revivals. Adelaide has no theatres open as present. George Darrell, George Rignold, Harry Rickards, and W. Emmerson are on tour with their companies in New Zealand. Mr. Wybert Reeve is starring in Brisbane. The Victoria and St. George's Halls in this city are occupied by minstrel combinations. One of them has played eighteen consecutive weeks —a sure proof, I hope, that we are not a vindictive people."

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"The Old Love and the New," Mr. James Albery's version of Mr. Bronson Howard's play, "The Banker's Daughter," was selected by the Carleton Dramatic Club for their final performance this season, March 27. St. George's Hall was well filled by the friends of the Society, and the Hanover Orchestra, under the direction of Mr. G. Glampit, gave some pleasant music during the *entr'actes*. The performance was good as a whole. Mr. A. E. Drinkwater was rather heavy as John Stratton, but acted very well in the scene where husband and wife part. Harold Kenyon found an earnest representative in Mr. E. Gordon Taylor, and Mr. J. C. Carstairs would have

been a good Westbrook had he known his words better. Mr. H. G. Carstairs made a capital George Washington Phipps, having formed a correct idea of the character, and not overdoing it. Mr. John M Powell has seldom been seen to better advantage than as Le Comte de Carojac ; this cool, polished cynic was well portrayed by him ; especially good was the *hauteur* and scorn with which he treated Kenyon, when he believes the latter refuses to fight. Miss Ivan Bristow was pathetic and interesting as Lillian, Miss Holland was a first-rate Mrs Brown, and Miss Cooke, the leading lady of The Glow-worms, appeared to advantage as Aunt Nancy. Little Miss Florie Millward was good as the child, and Miss Knewstub was the maid. The remaining parts were satisfactorily filled by Messrs. H. L. Smiles, H. Weden Cooke, W. Christie, and A. H. Beard.

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Another splendid book has been added to the theatrical library by Mr. Austin Brereton, one of the most patient and accurate of young stage historians, ready to follow in the footsteps of such authorities as E. L. Blanchard, Dutton Cook, Moy Thomas, and Joseph Knight. Mr. Brereton's last contribution to dramatic literature, recently published by the eminent firm of Cassell and Co., is called "Shakespearean Plays and Characters." All the principal plays are superbly illustrated, and to each picture Mr. Brereton has added a descriptive text, giving the history of the play under discussion, and any remarkable and interesting points connected with any actor, or scene, or character with this particular play. Mr. Brereton's learning takes a wide range, and extends from Betterton to Irving, to whom the author appropriately dedicates this handsome and useful volume. Exigencies of space have no doubt crippled the author. It is impossible to state in a page or so of text the various interesting anecdotes and traditions connected with the most popular acting plays of Shakespeare. But considering the limit allowed to the author, Mr. Brereton has done his work remarkably well, and we hope that Messrs. Cassell will see their way to issuing a cheaper edition, and will encourage the author to amplify the existing text. We have the foundation here for a very valuable work indeed. Mr. Brereton's style is even, temperate, and agreeable ; his criticisms are just and discriminating ; his judgments are never marred by the hot enthusiasm of youth, and he writes with remarkable firmness and sobriety for one so young. The drawing-room table and the library bookshelves are the gainers by Mr. Brereton's new book.

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New plays produced, and important revivals, in London, the provinces, and Paris, from March 25 to April 19, 1886:—

(Revivals are marked thus \*.)

#### LONDON:

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| March 27 | "The Schoolmistress," an original farce, in three acts, by A. W. Pinero. Court Theatre.  |
| ,, 30    | "On Tour," comedietta, by James Mortimer. Strand Theatre.  |
| April 3  | "Jim, the Penman," drama, by Sir Charles L. Young. Haymarket. (Originally acted at the same theatre on the afternoon of March 25.) |
| ,, 8     | "A United Pair," comedietta, by J. Comyns Carr. St. George's Hall.   |
| ,, 12    | "Sophia," comedy, in four acts, by Robert Buchanan, founded on Fielding's "Tom Jones." Vaudeville Theatre.                         |
| ,, 20    | "Veracity," farcical comedy, in three acts, by Walter Parke. Gaiety Theatre. (Matinée—single performance.)                         |

#### PROVINCES:

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| March 25 | "Passion's Power," drama, by G. H. Shirley. New Cross Public Hall.                                |
| April 5  | "Racing," new and original drama, in five acts, by G. H. Macdermott. Star Theatre, Wolverhampton. |
| ,, 9     | "False Lights," original drama, in four acts, by J. B. Bannister. Theatre Royal, Birkenhead.      |
| ,, 15    | "The Chicks," farcical comedy, by W. F. Field. Beach's Hall of Varieties, Brentford.              |
| ,, 19    | "Too Much Married," farcical comedy, in three acts, by Mark Melford. Grand Theatre, Glasgow.      |

#### PARIS:

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| March 22 | "Modèle," one-act comedy in verse, by Pierre Barbier. Odéon.   |
| ,, ,     | "Phalène," one-act ballet. Eden.   |
| ,, 25    | "La Bénédiction des Poignards," comedy-bouffe, in three acts, by MM. Hippolyte Raymond and Rambert. Cluny.                           |
| ,, 28*   | "Doit-on le dire?" comedy, in three acts, by MM. Labiche and Duru. Cluny.  |
| ,, 29*   | "Fédora," drama, in four acts, by Victorien Sardou. Porte St. Martin.  |
| ,, 30*   | "Serge Panine," drama, in five acts, by Georges Ohnet. Gymnase.  |
| ,, 31    | "Plutus," comic opera, in three acts, libretto by MM. Albert Millaud and Gaston Jollivet, music by Charles Lecocq. Opéra Comique.    |
| April 1. | "Les Ménages de Paris," comedy, in five acts and six tableaux, by MM. Hippolyte Raymond, Paul Burani, and Maxime Boucheron. Nations. |
| ,, 2     | "Paris qui Pleure," drama, in five acts and six tableaux, by Xavier Bertrand. Château d'Eau.   |

- April      3\* "Le Club," comedy, in three acts, by MM. Edmond Gondinet and Félix Cohen. Vaudeville.
- "      3 "Les Grandes Demoiselles," comedy, in one act, by Edmond Gondinet. Vaudeville.
- "      ,\* "Le Cabinet Piperlin," comedy-bouffe, in three acts, by MM. Hippolyte Raymond and Paul Burani. Cluny.
- "      8\* "Les Dominos Roses," comedy, in three acts, by MM. Delacour and Hennequin. Renaissance.
- "      9 "Chamillac," comedy, in five acts, by Octave Feuillet. Théâtre Français.
- "      10 "Les Poches des Autres," comedy, in one act, by Maurice Hennequin. Déjazet.
- "      ,\* "Les Trois Chapeaux," comedy, in three acts, by Alfred Hennequin. Déjazet.
- "      14 "Le Songe d'une Nuit d'Eté," *féerie*, in three acts and eight tableaux, in verse and in prose, by Paul Meurice, from Shakespeare's "Midsummer Night's Dream. Odéon.
- "      16 "Monsieur Irma," comedy, in one act, by Maurice Hennequin. Renaissance.
- "      19\* "Le Songe d'une Nuit d'Eté," comic opera, in three acts, libretto by MM. Rosier and De Leuven, music by Ambroise Thomas. Opéra Comique.
- "      19 "Monsieur de Crac," *féerie*, in four acts and twenty-five tableaux, by MM. Ernest Blum and Raoul Toché. Châtelet.
- "      20 "Le Bonheur Conjugal," comedy, in three acts, by Albin Valabregue. Gymnase.
- "      21\* "Patrie," historical drama in five acts and eight tableaux, by Victorien Sardou. Porte-St.-Martin.
- "      22 "La Perche," comedy-vaudeville in three acts, by M.M. Jules Prével and Gaston Marot. Palais-Royal.



## A Ballad of Fortune.

. . . “the sparse overflow  
Of Fortune’s horn.”

MORTIMER COLLINS.

### I.

**S**HE wears a bandage o’er her eyes,  
And ever whirls a gilded wheel,  
With scorn she hears the aching sighs  
Of those who round her altars kneel ;  
She flouts them for the pangs they feel,  
And frowns severe should they upraid—  
Ah, me ! the truth I must reveal,  
Dame Fortune is a fickle jade.

### II.

I, too, have worshipped at her shrine,  
And watched her restless wheel go round ;  
On some she smiles with love benign,  
With laurel wreaths their heads are crowned ;  
While others, kneeling on the ground,  
In vain implore her magic aid—  
Alas ! I, too, the truth have found,  
Dame Fortune is a fickle jade.

### III.

Why was not Fortune made a man,  
And not a woman, light and free ;  
For, if ’twere so, our life’s brief span  
Would be less full of misery ;  
Such foolish freaks as those we see  
Would surely then be never played—  
Alas ! I fear this cannot be,  
Dame Fortune is a fickle jade.

### ENVOI.

My Prince, in every line of life,  
The law, the stage, and even trade,  
We find that this remark is rife—  
Dame Fortune is a fickle jade.

FERGUS W. HUME.

# THE THEATRE.

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## Hippolyte Clairon.

BY FREDERICK HAWKINS.

### PART I.

IF an autobiography lying before me is worthy of credence, a curious incident occurred at the little town of Saint Wanon de Condé, near Condé, on the north-eastern frontier of France, during the carnival of 1723. In conformity with a custom long observed at this season, crowds of persons repaired to the houses of the wealthiest inhabitants, where, in conjunction with the local clergy, all in masquerade dress, they spent a day in somewhat obstreperous merrymaking. One of the revellers, a sempstress named Léris, was unexpectedly taken ill, and on being carried home was safely delivered of a daughter. Born prematurely, the child did not seem likely to live many hours, and a pious relative determined to have it baptised without delay. But the church was closed ; even the beadle had disappeared. In this strait the relative heard that several priests had gone to a particular house, and thither the little stranger was carried. In the midst of a motley gathering, with a band discoursing more or less exhilarating music, M. le Curé and his vicar were disporting themselves as harlequin and clown respectively. Finding the case urgent, they turned a sideboard into a font, procured what was necessary for the ceremony, ordered the musicians to stop for a few moments, and, without divesting themselves of their grotesque dresses, gave the child a “passport to the skies” under the names of Claire Joseph Hippolyte Latude.

Before long, Mdme. Léris, apparently a widow, settled as an ouvrière in Paris, the Eldorado of rich and poor alike. It was in

circumstances hardly favourable to the cultivation of intelligence and tenderness of nature that Claire Léris passed her early life. Her mother was ignorant, violent, unsympathetic, cruel. Few ideas beyond the trade of a sempstress enlarged the girl's mental horizon ; no gleam of maternal affection relieved the sordid misery by which she was surrounded from the outset. Some unnamed friend taught her to read and write a little, but that was practically all. Apart from her Bible and church service, the only books she could obtain were stories of ghosts and sorcerers, in the truth of which she was led to repose implicit faith. Especially hard became her lot when she was deemed old enough to take a share in the work of plying needle and thread from morn till dewy eve. In her own words, she had a "horror for the work of the hand," and "could not endure the thought of being only an ouvrière." For this reason she did not respond to her mother's expectations ; threats and blows were rained upon her with a resolution equal to her own, and her existence was made as wretched as that of the most unfortunate waif and stray in the slums of the city.

In the midst of this misery, at the age of eleven, she happened to witness a scene which did much to determine her future career. M<sup>dme</sup>. Léris moved to a house exactly opposite M<sup>dlle</sup>. Dangerville's, and Claire was often shut up in a dreary front room as a punishment for her obstinate disregard of the dignity and importance of labour. From the window here, standing upon a chair, she once saw the "idol of the parterre," of whom she had never heard, take a dancing lesson in the presence of her family, with evidences of material comfort about her on every side. "No charm that nature and youth could supply," writes the spectator "was wanting in her. My very being came into my eyes ; I lost none of her movements. Her exercise finished, the throng about her burst into applause, while her mother embraced her in a transport of affectionate pride. How much her fate differed from mine ! I was seized with a profound emotion ; my tears would not let me see any more. I left the window, and when I returned to it, the whole group had disappeared."

For some weeks, fearing that by avowing her experience she would prevent its renewal, the forlorn girl wisely kept her secret. Meanwhile, she knew no pleasure save that of being sent *en pénitence* to the room in question. "Happily," she writes, "my

mother's business or bad temper condemned me to it rather frequently. I then flew to the window ; the weather was in my favour. I saw to the furthest corner of the chamber of my divinity. I observed her as closely as possible, afterwards imitating all she had done. My memory and application were such that those who came to the house believed I had received instruction from masters. My deportment was no longer the same ; new ideas developed themselves in my mind." Even her mother, as though to show that she was not an anomaly in the history of the human heart, began to testify some satisfaction in the growing intelligence and grace of her ill-treated offspring. Presently, anxious to know what her divinity was, Mdlle. Léris took into her confidence a man who occasionally looked in, and who had won her goodwill by not treating her exactly as a child. He at once set her curiosity at rest, at the same time giving her a description of, and promising to take her to, the Comédie Française. Mdme. Léris, taught to believe that theatrical entertainments made one of the many roads to perdition, sternly set her face against the redemption of this promise, but was eventually prevailed upon to give way.

"Le Comte d'Essex" and "Les Folies Amoureuses" composed the programme on the evening selected for Claire's first visit to a playhouse. "It is not in my power," she says, "to tell you what then passed in my mind. I only know that during the performance and the rest of the evening I could not be made to eat or articulate a word. 'Beast, go to bed !' was all that I heard after my return home. Instead of going to bed, however, I set myself to repeat what had been said and to imitate what had been done at the theatre. On the morrow, I confounded those who listened to me by reciting a hundred lines of the tragedy and two *tiers* of the afterpiece. But this feat of memory created less astonishment than the way in which I seized the peculiarities of each player. I lisped like Grandval ; I stammered like Poisson ; I managed to illustrate the *air fin* of Mdlle. Dangerville," the most sparkling of Lisettes ; "and the *air roide et froid* of Mdlle. Balicourt. In a word, I was regarded as a prodigy. On the other hand, my mother declared with a frown that it would be better if I learnt to make a dress or chemise than think of such trumpery. At these words I lost control of myself. I said I would not be a sempstress, as I wished to go on the stage. My mother replied with

curses and blows, adding that she would starve me to death or break every bone in my body unless I worked as she did. ‘In that case,’ I said, with all the firmness that could be expected in one so young, ‘you had better kill me at once, for I shall certainly be an actress if I live.’”

Mdme. Léris, moved to an unexpected display of maternal tenderness by the reproaches of a neighbour, acceded to her daughter’s wishes on the somewhat difficult condition that by-gones should be bygones ; and Claire, having been introduced to and tutored by the actor Deshais, appeared at the Comédie Italienne in the name of Clairon—a variation upon that of Claire—as the soubrette in a little comedy by Marivaux, “*L’Île des Esclaves*,” originally produced there in 1725. Barely twelve years of age, of less than medium height, but rejoicing in a voice of unusual flexibility and sweetness, she at once made a mark in juvenile characters. “The applause I received”—I again quote from the autobiography—“consoled my mother for the course I had taken. I was provided with masters in writing, dancing, music, and Italian. My ardour and my memory surprised my instructors. I devoured all; I retained all. But my extreme youth, the smallness of my stature, a fear entertained by the famous Thomassin”—an admirable Arlequin, whose real name was Antonio Vicentini, and who died soon afterwards—“that my talents would injure the prospects, as yet undecided, of his daughters”—all this, combined with the want of powerful influence in her favour, forced her, at the end of about twelve months, to seek fortune elsewhere.

Lanoue had then entered into his partnership with Mdlle. Gautier in the management of what was rather loosely called the Rouen company. Mdlle. Clairon joined it to play a few parts in the drama proper, sing in comic opera, and dance in the ballets, her mother, whose scruples were not proof against a sense of self-interest, accompanying her as opener of boxes and distributor of tickets. That the young actress-singer found much encouragement to persevere in her self-elected calling there can be little doubt. No one without celebrity is made the subject of a book, and an honour of this kind soon fell to her lot. Foiled in an attempt to win her affections, a fellow player, Guillard de Labataille, concocted a “*Histoire de Mdlle. Cronel Cléron, dite Frétillon, Actrice de la Comédie de Rouen, Ecrite par Elle-même*

Même," in which she was represented as having been engaged in many disgraceful adventures. It is significant of the position she then occupied that this infamous libel ran through ten editions. "I was at Havre," she tells us, "when it appeared. My anguish was beyond all expression. I returned to Rouen in an agony of apprehension, but only to find the same public and the same friends as before." If at this time her private life was above reproach, as she asserts it to have been, it soon presented opportunities to scandal. Persistently urged by her splenetic mother to espouse an old member of the company—a persecution once emphasised by the levelling of a pistol at her head—she sought and found a protector in a man who could not make her his wife.

Mdlle. Gautier and Lanoue broke up the troupe to make *débuts* in Paris; and Clairon, then in her twenty-second year, with her gifts so far developed that Sarrasin, chancing to see her play Eriphyle, predicted that she would be one of the pillars of the Comédie Française, put herself at the head of some players on the point of going to Ghent for the diversion of the English troops scattered over the Low Countries. Here, however, no histrionic or social triumph could afford her pleasure. In her own words, "I was neither flattered by the suffrages I won, nor tempted by the large fortune which my Lord M—— placed at my disposal. The contempt which the English nation affected for mine rendered them all unendurable in my eyes. It was impossible for me to hear them without anger." Nor was she at the pains to conceal her sentiments; and the hated foreigners, thinking that without her the company would be shorn of all its attractions, made her a sort of prisoner. From this durance she escaped to Dunkirk, where, through the medium of the Commandant, she received from the Court an order to appear at the Opéra in Paris as the double of Mdlle. Lemaure. Probably her patriotic attitude towards the English had something to do with this recognition of her claims.

Her stay at Molière's theatre was not to be of long duration. It is true that she seemed likely to endow the opera with a new charm. "Having a voice of extraordinary compass," she writes, "I had the good fortune, though only a very mediocre musician, to succeed." Reams of verses were penned in her praise, the following being elicited by her singing and acting as the heroine in Danchet's "*Hésione*":—

Hier, à leur gré, tes sons mélodieux,  
 Belle Clairon, moissonnaient le suffrage ;  
 Et tes attraits, toujours victorieux,  
 Montraient Vénus, et frappaient davantage.  
 Tous les Amours venaient te rendre hommage,  
 T'applaudissaient ; c'était à qui mieux mieux.  
 L'aîné de tous, quoique d'humeur volage,  
 S'est pour jamais établi dans tes yeux.  
 Qui l'a fixe ? C'est ton air gracieux.  
 Oui, je l'ai vu ; j'étais dans le parterre,  
 Lorsqu'à sa mère il a fait ces adieux :  
 Tant que Clairon restera sur la terre,  
 Je ne veux point retourner dans les Cieux.

But “so little talent,” she adds, “was needed in this theatre for appearing to have much of it, so little merit did I find in following only the modulations of the musician, the tone of the coulisses displeased me so thoroughly, the mediocrity of the appointments made the necessity of demeaning oneself so absolute, that at the end of four months I sent in my resignation.”

From the Opéra, at the request of the Gentlemen of the Chamber, she went over to the Comédie Française as an intended double of Mdlle. Dangeville in the soubrettes. Her experience of tragedy was as yet very slight ; she knew only five leading characters in this department, and had heard each only once or twice. Nevertheless, on learning from the “semainiers,” as a number of players who governed the Comédie in rotation were called, that the laws of the theatre required a combination of all or many kinds of histrionic talent, she impulsively determined to begin as a votary of Melpomene. “My proposition,” she tells us, “was received with coolness and disdain. Piqued, I adhered to it in a manner to show that I had a head which required a little management. It was then suggested that I should play Inès or Aricie in ‘Phèdre.’ I replied that such parts were too small for me (que c'était trop peu de chose), and that I should play Phèdre herself. I did not know how great Mdlle. Dumesnil was in this part ; I had not been to the Comédie since the ‘Comte d’Essex’ night. Everybody laughed ; I was assured that the audience would not allow me to finish the first act. I became hot with indignation, but had the pride to carry me through. ‘Messieurs,’ I said, ‘that is certainly possible. But the question is whether I am to appear or not. I have the right to choose my part. I play Phèdre or nothing ! ’ ” And in the end, probably with the most dismal forebodings on the part of the *semainiers*, she was allowed to have her way.

No *début* could have been attended with more splendid success than that which the *semainiers* expected to create a riot in the theatre. Beginning on September 19, 1743, with Lanoue and Sarrasin probably looking on from the wings, it comprised performances of Phèdre, Dorine in "Tartuffe," Zénobie in "Rhadamiste," Ariane in Thomas Corneille's tragedy, and the "Electra" of Crébillon. "The players," says the *Mercure de France*, in its stately and self-possessed style, "have revived Racine's tragedy of 'Phèdre.' Mdlle. Clairon, a new actress, has appeared in it for the first time. She represented the principal personage amidst general applause." Seldom, indeed, had the most difficult of Racine's heroines met with so noble a representative, and the actors who had predicted her failure must have glanced at each other in mingled wonderment and pleasure as the curtain fell. Her Dorine seems to have been unsatisfactory, but any ground she may have lost here was more than recovered by her subsequent essays in tragedy. Perhaps the general verdict of the town was best summed up in some graceful lines by Voltaire, to the effect that she was the greatest actress yet possessed by the French stage. Mdlle. Dumesnil, it was at least certain, found in her a formidable rival; and early in November, about seven weeks after her first appearance, she became a *sociétaire* of the Comédie.

It must have been simply from motives of self-interest that the players hastened to receive the new comer. Her presence among them was not likely to promote the internal harmony upon which so much of their well-being depended. High-spirited to a fault, she never failed to express her opinion, to uphold her real or fancied rights, to repay a slight with compound interest, or to set her face against any act unworthy of the "comédiens du Roi." Her manner behind the scenes is said to have been marked by a "disdainful hauteur." But to this fiery and unaccommodating temper she united a histrionic power obviously destined to be a mine of wealth for the home of the poetic drama. Her acting had sufficient warmth of imagination to transport the auditor out of himself. Most of her contemporaries concur in allowing her to have been a woman of genius. Nor was her execution unequal to the glowing energy of her conceptions. By the working of her symmetrical countenance, with or without the aid of her usually fine voice, "she painted," says Thomas, the eulogist of Descartes

"all the passions—hatred, rage, indignation, sorrow, love, humanity, gaiety, joy. Nay, she painted the passions in all their shades and differences. In terror, for example, she expressed affright, fear, embarrassment, surprise, uneasiness." In the words of a Danish writer, "she went through a number of opposite feelings, soft melancholy, despair, languid tenderness, raving fury, scorn, and melting love. She was wonderful at these transitions. But she never put off the woman; in the midst of violent rage she was always feminine. When she beat her forehead with such a cloudy look, with such a cry, we were all aghast." Unlike the chief actresses of her time, who neglected some passages in order to produce greater effect in others, she elaborated her characters in the minutest details, subordinating all to the development and illustration of a definite idea. But it was to art rather than nature that she owed her early triumphs. In her, perhaps, the craft of the player reached its highest recorded point. Her style, without being exactly stagey, was measured, severe, statuesque. It is said that she never gave way to a sudden impulse; all her tones and gestures had been carefully rehearsed beforehand. Dexterously concealed, this artificiality was not without a potent charm, even to playgoers enamoured of the school of acting restored during the past thirty years. Her step, her attitudes, her facial expression, the motions of her head and arms and hands—all had a dignity and grace which captivated the eye as closely as her acting in other respects did the imagination and the understanding:—

*Quelle grace, quel feu, quelle aimable peinture,  
 Clairon, tu réunis dans ton jeu séducteur !  
 Ce que l'Art, joint à la Nature  
 Peut former de plus enchanteur.  
 Cent fois, te voyant sur la scène  
 Ravir les suffrages divers,  
 J'ai cru que c'était Melpomène  
 Qui récitait ses propres vers.*

Mdlle. Dumesnil, partly by reason of her more natural method, remained supreme in the combination of tragic force with pathos and tenderness; but in characters of the sterner type, especially those including an element of lofty and inflexible pride, Clairon well merited the eulogium bestowed upon her by Voltaire. *Medée*, *Phèdre*, *Hermione*, *Zénobie*, *Didon*, *Cléopatre*, acquired from her a new interest and freshness. Fortunately, her early and instant

success did not delude her into a belief that she had little to learn. From the outset she made her art a subject of profound and unremitting study. Her private rehearsals, indeed, were so many that she insensibly acquired a rather theatrical air off the stage—an air which, joined to the haughtiness already mentioned, exposed her at times to no little ridicule. But that ridicule was often blended with a feeling of admiration quite unconnected with her histrionic gifts. If her wretched and untended childhood had to some extent embittered her temper, as was probably the fact, it did not prevent her from rising to a high pitch of self-denying generosity towards those whom she esteemed.

*(To be concluded in our next Number.)*



## Desdemona.

“Cold, cold, my girl—cold as thy chastity.”—OTHELLO.

DRAW back the velvet curtains, let the light  
Rush wonderingly in! She will not say  
The sunbeams dazzle her. . . . Eternal Night  
Hath closed for her the portals of the Day.  
Look you how fair she is! as fair as when  
She smiled on Cassio—prithee, where's her wrong?—  
One woman, sure, doth smile on many men!  
'Twas but a little discord in the song,  
A little jarring of the notes—a string  
Snapt as the minstrel was about to sing,  
But jealous Love threw down his lute and wept,  
Calling for music, when all music slept,  
Save “willow, willow!” dying in the air,—  
The last faint utt'rance of a soul's despair!

MARIE CORELLI.

## “Faust.”

LYCEUM THEATRE, 1885.

DEDICATED TO HENRY IRVING.

THE curtain rises! and, as in a dream,  
Or by the wave of a magician’s wand,  
The theatre-lights grow dim, and lo, we see  
An old-time city, peaceful, fair, and quaint,  
A grand cathedral, through whose portals float  
Echoes of music, noble, grand, and pure—  
Now, in the rise and fall of organ notes,  
Then, in glad voices, hailing Easter-morn—  
Blending with joyous peals of chiming bells,  
Mirror’d by peaceful sights and sounds is told  
The strange old story, which will never lose  
Its mighty hold upon the hearts of men,  
Whilst tempest rages between Right and Wrong,  
Which threaten oft to tear the soul in twain!

As in a magic mirror, we behold  
The counterpart of countless human lives ;  
We see a man, studious, thoughtful, wise,  
Within whose heart hot passions long have slept,  
Till comes the Tempter, waking them to life !  
And lo ! they leap and course through ev’ry vein.  
Quick to the winds he flings his honour, fame,  
His peace of mind, and all he once held dear !  
“ Give me my love,” he cries, “ and I am yours ! ”  
Step after step, we trace his downward course,  
From the dark hour, which seals the compact dread,  
To one, more awful still, when Love’s bright dream—  
So sweet, so brief—is o’er, and close around  
His restless soul are drawn the Tempter’s chains—  
Those iron links which once seemed light as air !  
And nought remains, save endless bitter shame  
And agonised remorse. For has he not  
Dragged with him, in his fall, another soul

Down from the throne of stainless innocence,  
To fade and die, a crushed and broken flow'r?  
Then falls the curtain, for the tale is told.

We wake, as from a trance, and once again  
Take up the burden of our daily life;  
But the remembrance of those wondrous scenes  
Becometh not—as others oft have done—  
Nought but a dim and misty memory:  
Nay, for the foremost actors of our time—  
Whose constant aim it is to realize  
The grand ideal of a noble art—  
Teach to the world great lessons in this play,  
Which may, perchance, sink deep in human hearts  
When floods of pulpit-orat'ry have failed!

Are there no modern Fausts in this our land,  
Willing to barter all—aye, their own souls,  
That they may taste of some forbidden fruit  
Which grows in Pleasure's broad and flow'r-strewn path?  
May not to such—through pastime—be revealed  
(Ere toll the death-knell o'er a wasted life,  
Ere sound the awful words "Too late, too late"!)  
How serpents lurk beneath the bright-hued flow'rs?  
How that the fruit, so pleasant to the eye,  
Crumbles, like Dead-Sea apples, at the touch,  
And whither tends that pathway once so fair?

Fair dainty maidens—lovely, bright, and pure,  
Shielded with tender care from ev'ry ill,  
And finding life but one glad summer day—  
Here catch a glimpse of the great Tempter's pow'r  
O'er a lost soul which once was white as their's!  
And so, if e'er across their sunny path  
Falleth the shadow of a ruined life—  
Of one "who loved, not wisely, but too well,"  
But reapeth now, in tears and anguish sore,  
The bitter harvest, sown in days gone by:  
Perchance, at that sad sight, the memory  
May steal, like solemn music, o'er the heart—  
Of a pale, weary face and mournful eyes,  
Raised to the Holy Mother's sacred shrine,

There, pouring forth in sad, despairing words,  
 Heart-broken penitence and tearful pray'r ;  
 Whose grief God's holy angels soothed at last !  
 Ah ! who can tell but that remembered scene  
 May cause the cold disdainful thought to die  
 Unuttered ? For shall erring mortals dare  
 To shrink away, as from a loathsome thing—  
 To swell the chorus of the world's harsh scorn  
 'Gainst one on whom, with pity, angels gaze ?  
 Nay ! rather their's to speak the gentle words  
 That fall like balm upon the wounded heart,  
 The crystal words that cause the flow'r of Hope  
 To bloom, and brighten a despondent life.

A play we call it ! Aye, 'tis more than that ;  
 It shadows forth a great reality !  
 Leading us forth to touch the borderland  
 Of that vast world—so close about us all,  
 And yet invisible to mortal eyes—  
 Wherein, till Time itself shall be no more,  
 A truceless war is ever sternly waged  
 'Twixt pow'rs of God, and our great Enemy  
 For the possession of the souls of men !

And ev'ry pilgrim on life's toilsome road  
 Doth stand—sooner, or late—where two ways meet ;  
 And there, must make that choice 'twixt God and Sin,  
 On which the future destiny depends !  
 For, maybe, Duty's path looks rough and bare,  
 While Pleasure lures to some fair sunny mead,  
 And sore temptations press the struggling soul  
 To choose the evil and refuse the good.  
 Who knows, some day may flash the memory  
 Of Faust's sad story and its mournful end—  
 When, stripped of all his tinsel bravery,  
 At last Incarnate Evil stood revealed !  
 God in His mercy grant, then, too, may come  
 A strange new strength to the once fainting heart—  
 A pow'r to fight against the subtle Foe—  
 Till turns the Tempter, back to whence he came :  
 And one more soul is gained for God and Heav'n !

## John Henderson.

BY AUSTIN BRERETON.

JOHN HENDERSON was of the school, but not an imitator, of David Garrick. His life is instructive as an example of success attained by perseverance. London, at first, denied him a home. Bath gave him a welcome, and in this city, so full of theatrical associations, he worked bravely, and achieved legitimate fame. When he did reach the goal of every actor's ambition, he found himself surrounded with enemies, not the least of whom was Garrick himself. But his talents were recognised in the metropolis, and when his life came to a close, at the early age of thirty-eight, it was with an honourable and brilliant record. Henderson, who was descended from Scottish Presbyterians and English Quakers, was born in Goldsmith-street, Cheapside. The exact date of his birth is not known, but he was baptised on March 8, 1747, a few days after his birth. A year later, his father, an Irish factor, died, leaving his widow and two sons but slenderly provided for. When two years of age, the boy was removed by his mother to Newport Pagnel, Buckinghamshire, where he remained ten years, going afterwards to a boarding school at Hemel Hempstead, where he resided little more than twelve months. He then returned to London, and, having a taste for drawing, was apprenticed to Fournier. The boy had to drive his master when he went out to give drawing lessons, and to clean the chaise and rub down the horse on returning home. But young Henderson did other work as well at this time, for he made a drawing which was exhibited at the Society of Arts and Sciences, and obtained a premium, in 1767. Leaving Fournier, Henderson went to reside with a near relation, a silversmith of considerable business, in St. James's-street, with whom it was intended he should enter into partnership. But the death of this relation put an end to the scheme. Hereafter, he bent his attention to the stage, but before he could obtain a footing on it he had to undergo

a long and somewhat severe struggle. In his boyish days his mother had placed in his hands a volume of Shakespeare, and he had become possessed with an idea of representing on the stage characters which he had seen in his mind's eye. His first introduction was to George Garrick and resulted in a rebuff, Mr. Garrick declaring that his voice was so feeble that he could not possibly convey articulate sounds to the audience of any theatre. Nothing daunted, he pursued his favourite object, and, having formed an acquaintance with a bookseller at whose shop David Garrick was often to be seen, and through whom he obtained an introduction to the great actor. But Garrick would have nothing to say to the young aspirant. An application to the elder Colman was treated with lofty contempt. At length Henderson made his first bow in public, at the Pope's Head, Islington, where he delivered Garrick's "Ode on the Shakespeare Jubilee," for the benefit of an inferior actor. After dancing attendance upon Garrick for more than two years, Henderson prevailed upon him to grant an audience to him. The manager declared that his voice was not sufficiently melodious or clear, or his pronunciation articulate enough; or, to use his own words, "that he had in his mouth too much wool or worsted, which he must absolutely get rid of before he would be fit for Drury Lane stage." Garrick got rid of Henderson by sending him with a letter of introduction to the manager of the theatre at Bath, where he was engaged at the munificent salary of a guinea a week.

His first appearance on the stage was made on October 6, 1772, his first character being Hamlet, "by a young gentleman." Assuming the name of Courtney, he played Richard III. on the 21st of the same month. These characters were speedily followed by Benedick, Macbeth, Captain Bobadil, Bayes, Don Felix, the Earl of Essex, Hotspur (on December 26, when he played under his own name), Fribble, King Lear, Hastings, Alonzo, Alzuma—a pretty good round of parts for anyone of twenty-five years of age to attempt! He performed in tragedy and farce every night during the season, and his fame rapidly rose. He returned to London in the summer of 1773, where he did not engage in any theatre, and in the autumn went back to Bath, adding to his repertory the characters of Pierre, Don John, Comus, Othello, Archer, Ranger, Sir John Brute, Belville in "The School for Wives," Henry II., Beverley in "The Man of Business," and



HENDERSON



Zanga. During this season Garrick, ever jealous of a rival near the throne, saw Henderson, and wrote from Bath—"His Don John is a comic Cato, and his Hamlet is a mixture of tragedy, comedy, pastoral farce, and nonsense ; he has a manner of paving, when he would be emphatic, that is ridiculous, and must be changed, or he would not be suffered near the Bedford Coffee-house." Applications for engagements were vainly made to Garrick and Foote, and it was not until an accident happened that he obtained an opening in London. In 1777, the elder Colman purchased the patent of the "Little Theatre" in the Haymarket from Samuel Foote, and, being in want of a novelty, engaged Henderson. The result was an instantaneous success, and, in thirty-four nights, four thousand five hundred pounds—a large sum for those days—flowed into the treasury. His first part on the London stage was Shylock, on June 11. This was quickly succeeded by Hamlet, Leon, Falstaff in "Henry IV." and in "The Merry Wives of Windsor," Richard III., Don John, and Bayes.

Henderson had to contend against considerable physical disadvantages ; his eye wanted expression, his figure was not well modelled and his voice was too thin for passion and not sufficiently soft for love. But against these defects he had a bright intelligence in his favour. His merits were greater than his defects. His mind was analytic, and he showed the inner working, the soul, of every character which he interpreted. Mrs. Siddons thought him the embodiment of feeling and intelligence. It is not surprising, therefore, that his first season in London was a success. Garrick was green with envy. After seeing Henderson as Shylock, he remarked that "Tubal was very creditably performed, indeed !" Enemies were still at work, and a friend of the actor's thought it necessary to take up the cudgels in his defence. Accordingly there was published, during Henderson's first season at the Haymarket, a pamphlet entitled "A Genuine Narrative of the Theatrical Transactions of Mr. John Henderson, the Bath Roscius," in which the actor's cause was warmly espoused, and which ran through at least two editions. Colman gave him a free benefit, from which he derived a large sum, and before the winter he was engaged by Sheridan, who had succeeded Garrick at Drury Lane, for two years, at a salary of ten pounds a week, and with an indemnification from his articles with the Bath manager. In the summer of 1778, he went to Ireland, where he was most favourably received. On January 13,

1779, he married a Wiltshire maiden with a fortune of five thousand pounds. After visiting Ireland again, he moved to Covent Garden at an increased salary. Now as much courted as he had been previously despised by the managers, he dictated his own terms, and swayed the public by his genius. During the last three months of his life he frequently played long and arduous characters. His final appearance before the footlights was made on November 3, 1785, when he acted Horatius in "The Roman Father," a tragedy founded on Corneille by William Whitehead, who succeeded Colley Cibber as Poet Laureate. An attack of brain-fever terminated in his death, at Buckingham-street, Strand, on November 25 of the same year. He was buried in Westminster Abbey, where he rests, in Poet's Corner, beside Garrick, Sheridan, and Dickens, and where he has for company such famous players, in addition to Garrick, as Betterton, the first Mrs. Barry, Anne Oldfield, Mrs. Bracegirdle, and Cibber.

Henderson's Falstaff was his best performance. Kemble and Munden, who all their lives longed to play the merry knight, were deterred from so doing by the remembrance of Henderson's excellency in it. There was, however, a mixture of the old woman with that of the old man in his performance; but he laughed throughout the entire part, and his laugh, like that of Dora Jordan, was irresistible to his audience. His Benedick was quite as good as Garrick's; his Shylock was excellent, and it is worthy of note that he was the first actor who differently pointed this passage:—

"Signor Antonio, many a time and oft, on the Rialto."

"Many a time and oft" was generally considered a common proverbial expression, but Henderson pointed it thus:—

"Signor Antonio, many a time, and oft on the Rialto";

thus implying that Antonio had not only generally "rated" him, but oft on the Rialto, "where merchants most do congregate." Henderson made a powerful impression in Cumberland's tragedy, "The Mysterious Husband," and he was unexcelled, save by Garrick, in the murder scene in "Macbeth," while his Iago was a masterly impersonation. His Sir Giles Overreach was also a fine rendering of the character, though somewhat too painfully elaborated, a fault generally to be found with his acting. His

Hamlet was only a creditable performance. Garrick-worshippers found fault with it because in the closet scene he did not, on seeing the ghost, upset the chair—"Mr. Garrick, sir, always overthrew the chair."

Henderson understood French and spoke it fluently. He has left behind him a few poetical pieces which prove him to have been a man of taste and humour. There is not a single blemish upon his private character. As a reader, he was unequalled. In the Lent of 1785 he entered into a partnership with Thomas Sheridan to deliver public readings at the Freemason's Hall. The serious passages were allotted to Sheridan, the comic ones to Henderson. Sheridan chiefly gave selections from his "*Lectures on Oratory*," which were generally dull and heavy, but his recitation of "*Alexander's Feast*" was animated and expressive to a great degree. His delivery of Shenstone's "*Elegy on Jessé*" was, however, cold and languid. On the other hand, Henderson's recitations from Sterne, and his recital of "*John Gilpin*," were irresistibly diverting; his rendering of the latter made Cowper's tale, previously unknown, popular all over the kingdom. The readings were attended with vast success, and would have been continued but for Henderson's early death.

Henderson founded the Shandean Club, which was held in Maiden Lane, Covent Garden. Shortly after his death, his "*Letters and Poems*" with "*Anecdotes of his Life*," by John Ireland, a rambling but otherwise inoffensive book, was published. A picture of him, by Gainsborough, hangs in the Garrick Club. The portrait illustrating this memoir is engraved from a painting by George Romney, and represents him in the character of Macbeth.



## First Appearances.

DAVID GARRICK.

BY PERCY FITZGERALD.

THE fascinating opportunity of trial, when, after an hour or two's terrible probation, the obscure candidate is acclaimed with rapture, and awakes next morning "to find himself famous" and his fortune made, is confined to but a few professions—to the orator, lawyer, writer, and, above all, to the player. The latter, however, most reaps the fruit of the exquisite delirium of unexpected success. There are the critical audience, the lights, the hum of expectation, the cold distrust, the extorted applause all changed into a whirl of enthusiasm, and the rapture of unmistakable approval, gathering as it goes. But there have been few of these great triumphs—scarcely half a dozen in all.

How often, as we turn to some old faded play-bill, the eye falls on the simple announcement: "Juliet, by Miss —— (*her first appearance on any stage*)"; or, it might be Juliet's young lover, "by a gentleman; his first appearance." This business-like, prosaic announcement has often significantly represented a life, a romance, decades of years, during which the public stock of harmless pleasure has been increased, together with vast sums of money produced. It seems, as we look, to have the power of a cabalistic charm. Often it has meant no more than the lighting of the candles, put out when the night was over; with it, perhaps, put out for ever, the pretensions of the candidate. Often it has betokened something almost tragic; all staked upon the cast of a die; indifferent, perhaps unjust judgment, with failure, from which there has been no recovery.

On the other hand, how exquisite and enviable, beyond all other sensations, the waking next morning from one dream to another—to the delicious sense of victory and success assured; the change from poverty to wealth, from doubt to certainty; to say nothing of the welcome incidents of flattering compliments,

congratulations, invitations. Few, however, have enjoyed these triumphs, and there is such a level of excellence nowadays that the contrast between mediocrity and the higher excellence is not likely to strike so effectively as it did before.

Strictly speaking, these grand successes and attendant ovations do not wait on *First Appearances*. There is really no instance of a person stepping straight from the street on the stage and being thus acclaimed tumultuously. There has always been some practice and training in obscure places. Still, these successes may be appropriately defined "first appearances," as it is the first appeal to the legitimate judges and to those who are best entitled to judge on the claim. Hitherto the postulant has been merely in the schools. Still, we can boast of one actor, and of one only, who may be said to have been an exception, and who succeeded almost without training or practice. This, it will be guessed, was David Garrick.

It seems like a romance. Here was an officer's son amusing himself in town, while affecting to follow the calling of a wine merchant, attending theatres and green-rooms; small of person, though a neatly-made, "*spract*" young man, with neither practice in stage-business or acting beyond amateur work, yet appearing at a small London theatre and taking the audience, as it is called, by storm.

A young fellow of a prudent and discreet character, such as he was, felt that the difficulties of his adopting the stage as a profession were almost insurmountable. His relations were all of the most respectable and sober kind, whom such a step would have outraged. His father had been an officer of French extraction, and his father's relations—the Fermignacs, strict Huguenots—well-to-do merchants, were settled at Carshalton. His uncle and sisters at Lichfield enjoyed the friendship and favour of the leading families of the neighbourhood. Failure, or even mediocre success, would bring not only disgrace but forfeiture of all hope of assistance and protection. This terror, as it almost seemed to be, was before him, even after he had taken the serious step. The attraction, however, was irresistible, and, instead of attending to his wine—the offices were in some of the old buildings that stood where Adelphi Terrace now stands—he was haunting the Green-rooms, and courting favour with such players as Macklin and the noted or notorious Woffington. He was also intimate with

the managers of two patent theatres, as well as with Giffard, who then directed a place of amusement in what is now the Minories, or Goodman's Fields, as it was then called, a new theatre where plays were "given gratis," the charge being nominally made for a concert, a trick which could not have borne serious discussion for a moment.

Goodman's Fields, however, was a new and beautiful house built by an architect of reputation, and handsomely decorated. It would appear to have been about the size of the present Royalty Theatre. Its advertisement figured in the daily papers with those of the patent houses. One night, when a harlequinade was being performed, the harlequin became indisposed, the young wine merchant being at hand, put on the mask and played two or three scenes. Not long after Mr. Giffard took some of his company "on tour" down to Ipswich, and the young man went with the party. There he appeared as Aboan in Southern's play of "Oronoko," assuming the name of Mr. Lyddal. He also appeared as Chamont in "The Orphan." He was received with favour, and tried other characters, comic as well as tragic. Yates, long one of the pillars of Drury Lane, used to relate anecdotes of the expedition; and one of the Giffards, who lived up to seventy years ago, used to boast that the young wine merchant had played Osric to his Hamlet. Returning to town quite fixed in his purpose of making the stage his profession, he applied to the managers of the patent theatres for an engagement, but was refused.\*

At this time there were only the two patent theatres of Drury Lane and Covent Garden to which the aspirant could turn his eyes when hoping for a chance to display his talents. And it is a matter of surprise why the young Mr. Garrick, who was behind the scenes at the greater houses, and knew the managers and players, did not make his venture in either of those places. The reason appears to have been dread of offending his highly reputable family in Lichfield. He was, as is well known, an officer's son; his family was on intimate terms with the leading people living near the city; and in the case of failure he would have brought discredit on the family name and have been cut off from

\*The pantomime at Goodman's Fields, which was strictly the occasion of Garrick's first appearance on any stage, was called "Harlequin's Student; or, A Tale of Pantomime, with a representation of Shakespeare's Monument." Yates, whose *remplacant* he was, played Harlequin.

all chances of assistance from his relatives. The failure at Goodman's Fields Theatre, a little obscure house in the Minories, would never have been heard of, or soon forgotten.

It was now the fateful night—the memorable 19th of October, 1741. We can call up the scene—the small, but elegantly decorated theatre, far away in the Minories, to which the neophyte's friends and supporters had journeyed from the coffee-houses and streets about Covent Garden. The house, it was said, was by no means full. The ceiling was decorated in the French manner, crowded with figures and painted historical scenes. There were many in the audience who could, sixty and seventy years later, relate the events of that night. Old Macklin always *imagined* he had been present; but I find that he was playing that night at another theatre. Taylor, the oculist; "Gentleman" Smith, the first Charles Surface; and Yates, the comedian, whose wife took part in the play, were among these. There was also a worthy Lichfield gentleman, Mr. Swinfen, who had an interest in the young man, and who has left an account of the night.

The bill had been given at length in the morning papers, with the announcement—"The part of King Richard by a gentleman who never appeared on any stage," a long-established form of stage fiction. There are collectors of "Garrick bills," and one virtuoso has one almost complete; but it may be doubted if any one possesses the bill of this night. Some seventy years ago "Mr. Smith, of Lisle-street," we are told, had a reprint made of a copy in his possession. Here it is, reprinted once more from my own copy, which itself is a rarity:—

#### GOODMAN'S FIELDS.

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At the THEATRE in *Goodman's Fields*, This Day,  
will be Performed

#### *A Concert of Vocal and Instrumental Music*

DIVIDED INTO TWO PARTS.

TICKETS AT THREE, TWO, AND ONE SHILLING.

Places for the Boxes to be taken at the FLEECE TAVERN, near the THEATRE

N.B.—Between the Two Parts of the Concert  
Will be presented an Historical Play, called the

LIFE AND DEATH OF  
King Richard the Third,  
CONTAINING THE DISTRESSES OF K. HENRY VI.,  
The artful acquisition of the Crown by *King Richard*,

The Murder of Young *King Edward V.* and his Brother in the Tower,

THE LANDING OF THE EARL OF RICHMOND,

And the Death of *King Richard* in the memorable Battle

of Bosworth Field, being the last that was fought

Between the Houses of York and Lancaster: with

many other true Historical Passages.

The Part of *King Richard* by a GENTLEMAN

(Who never appeared on any Stage).

*King Henry*, by Mr. Giffard. Richmond, Mr. Marshall.

*Prince Edward*, by Miss HIPPISLEY. *Duke of York*, Miss NAYLOR.

*Duke of Buckingham*, Mr. PATERSON. *Duke of Norfolk*, Mr. BLAKES.

*Lord Stanley*, Mr. PAGETT.

*Oxford*, Mr. VAUGHAN. *Tressel*, Mr. W. GIFFARD. *Catesby*,

Mr. MARR. Ratcliff, Mr. CROFTS.

*Blunt*, Mr. NAYLOR. *Tyrrel*, Mr. PUTTENHAM. *L. Mayor*, Mr. DUNSTALL.

*The Queen*, Mrs. STEEL. *Duchess of York*, Mrs. YATES.

And the Part of *Lady Anne*, by Mrs. GIFFARD.

With

### ENTERTAINMENTS OF DANCING

By Mons. FROME(N)T, Madame DEVALT, and the two Masters and Miss GRANIER.

To which will be added a Ballad Opera, of One Act, called

The Virgin Unmask'd.

The Part of *Lucy*, by Miss HIPPISLEY.

Both of which will be Performed GRATIS by Persons for their Diversion.

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The Concert will begin exactly at Six o'clock.

The quaint description of the play—"The distresses of K. Henry," "the artful acquisition of the Crown," will be noted, as well as the curious finale, that "both," meaning the two dramas, would be performed gratis by persons for their diversion. The charge for tickets was for the concert of music, a trick to avoid penalties. The leading support of the postulant was drawn from the manager's family, he himself, his brother and wife (*née* Lyddal) taking characters, while the Richmond came from the Theatre Royal, Smock Alley, Dublin, an actor named Marshall. "The rest is silence," at least as to the merit of any of the party.

Now, the first part of the concert is over, and the portion "given gratis" is about to commence. The curtain rises, and the young man, small of stature but bright in countenance, steps on. It was noted that he was nervous or disconcerted for a second or two, but recovered at once. The moment he set to work, it was seen—with surprise, we are told—that the character, and the varying emotions of the character, were repeated in his face. The different passions he was expressing in words were legible

there. We may smile at this obvious mode of interpretation, but how few of our own players cultivate the art of expression. The audiences were accustomed to a mechanical form of delivery, and "*the great Quin*," as he was then considered, kept his voice at an elevation, alternated with sudden and unmeaning depression. This ridiculous gamut had little or nothing to do with the sense. Just and natural modulation to suit the sense was never thought of. Judge of the astonishment and pleasure when here before the company was Richard himself, ferocious, passionate—expressing his villainy as such a being might do. As he proceeded, this realism, as it seemed then by contrast, was increased; so did his fire, spirit, and rage increase. His burst—"What does he in the North," was uttered in a tempest, and carried away the audience. In the dream scene, on the couch which Hogarth was presently to paint, he affected the audience astonishingly. He seemed a spectacle of horror. After calling out the well-known "Give me another horse," he paused, and with a countenance of dismay advanced, crying out in a tone of distress, "*Bind up my wounds!*" Then, falling on his side, said, in the most piteous accents, "Have mercy, Heaven!" Even as we read these words, the scene rises before us, and there is something original in the interpretation, notably in the pause. All this horror is certainly seen in the powerful face and attitude portrayed by Hogarth. Astonished, doubtful at first, as to this *new* style, the spectators were at last carried away by enthusiasm, delight, and surprise, from which emotions they relieved themselves by loud and reiterated plaudits. With the last act, the performance was so spirited, the "off with his head" was delivered with such a chuckle of enjoyment, that they broke into shouts; and his death was "accompanied with the loudest congratulations." At one time, indeed, his voice failed him, and he grew hoarse; but a worthy printer, called Leach, supplied an orange, an invaluable aid, and could thus boast that he had contributed to the success of the night.

It was complete, this triumph, and next day the "Daily Post," in a meagre but significant article, related how Richard had been performed by a gentleman who never appeared before, "whose reception was the most extraordinary and great *that was ever known on such an occasion*." The crescendo of fame and applause that succeeded is too well-known to enter on. The town became

"horn mad"; every one journeyed miles to the Minories, as they used to do some years ago to Tottenham Court Road, or an obscure theatre at Islington. Distance makes no difference where a craze is concerned. Pope went to see him three times, and declared him to be without a rival; royal personages came also.

Still the public were not informed who "the gentleman" was. For close on a month the bills announced every night that the part would be taken by "the gentleman who played the part before." And it was not until November 13, 1741, that it was given out formally that the play would be performed, "at the desire of several persons of quality, by Mr. GARRICK." But this success had nearly proved fatal to the theatre, for it drew to it the attention of the magistrates and licenser, to say nothing of the rival theatres. Twenty years after there was published a curious letter, which has escaped notice, and which shows in what peril the theatre stood. It was dated November 20—that is a month after Garrick's first appearance—and was written by a friend of the theatre.

DEAR FRIEND,—As to being settled at present, I cannot flatter myself with it, because our old friend, Sir John Barnard, has threatened Mr. Giffard with fresh persecution, and how in the end we may fare is very doubtful; but there is a man, one Garrick, who has turned actor and does wonders here, being much followed, having played Richard III., Clodio, Chamont, and a new part in a comedy called "Pamela," which is now acting, this being the tenth night, to great audiences. But this is too great success to last, for I hear that an uncle of his hath made him large offers to leave the stage, as by this means we shall not only lose but a good prospect of having, if unmolested from the aforesaid magistrate, a good season. P.S.—I have read that Mr. Garrick played the summer season at Ipswich previous, but not for any pecuniary advantage.

It is curious to find that the date of so remarkable an event as this should in a few years have been forgotten, some, like Chetwode, setting it down as having occurred in 1740. In a wonderful collection made about the commencement of the century by Mr. Nixon, and now in possession of the Garrick Club, there is recorded a bet by which Mr. Bedford "wagers two gallons of claret with Mr. Williams that Mr. Garrick did not play upon ye stage in ye year 1732 or before. Paid." The actor decides the question: "I acted at Goodman's Fields for first time in ye year 1741.—D. Garrick. Witness, G. Nursel, Draper."

But now came the anxiety—how to break it to the relatives. Terrible thought! This duty was kindly undertaken by a worthy Lichfield gentleman, who was in the audience. Next morning he

wrote to Brother Peter the dreadful news in a quaint, guarded style : “ My good friend David Garrick performed last night at Goodman’s Fields Theatre, and for fear you should hear a false or malicious account I will give you the truth. *For I was there,*” he goes on, “ and was witness to his merit. General applause he gained in the character of King Richard ye Third, for I believe there was not one in the house who was not in raptures, and I heard several men of judgment declare it their opinion that no one ever excelled him in the part.” The same post brought down to Lichfield the culprit’s own letter, which I have had in my hand, which began with a sham air of indifference : “ *The shirt came down safe !* ” There is a pleasant touch of comedy here. He had to make the most humble excuses—money all lost in the wine business—ruin approaching—his own late illness owing to this anxiety. But he had the feeling that he possessed the genius for it. “ His mind was set on it ; he would make £300 a year by it.” He had also to sit down and write to others of the family, who sent on the disagreeable news. “ Dear Madam,” wrote one,—“ Enclosed is a copy of a letter sent me from David Garrick, who play’d *crookback’d Richard*, and does it again to-night.” At the close he adds ruefully : “ This is his letter, which I leave you to consider, and am very sorry for the contents, but thought it best to communicate them to you.” It was as though some disgrace had come on them all. With success, however, all was condoned, and the relatives presently became eager to profit by David’s glories. Such was the rise of this truly bright and particular star.



## Our Musical-Box.

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### "LURLINE."

A New Burlesque, in three Acts, by R. REECE and H. B. FARNIE.

Produced at the Avenue Theatre for the first time on Saturday evening, April 24, 1886.

Sir Rupert ...	Mr. ARTHUR ROBERTS.	Lurline ...	Miss VIOLET CAMERON.
Skraggstein ...	Mr. E. J. LONNEN.	Anduletta ...	Miss PHYLLIS BROUGHTON.
Lord de Sophtroe ...	Mr. G. MOORE.	Rivuletta ...	Miss M. SHIRLEY.
Gnome Professor ...	Mr. S. WILKINSON.	Captain Crayfish ...	Miss E. BROUGHTON.
Baroness von Geyser ...	Mr. R. DANVERS.	Bob ...	Miss N. HARDINGE.

I have learned, upon competent authority, that Messrs. Reece and Farnie's latest bantling has acquired vigour and liveliness since the occasion of its first production in public; that the action has been "pulled together"; that Mr. Roberts has learned some of his lines; that a little agreeable waggery has been infused into one or two of the lyrics; and that the duller portions of the dialogue have been, here and there, judiciously excised. If my informant be correct, "Lurline" has a good chance of remaining on the Avenue bill for some time to come, and with reasonable profit to the management of that theatre. When I heard it, in all its pristine defectiveness, it held out but small promise of a long and prosperous career, although undeniably well set, mounted, and dressed, tunefully sung and gracefully danced; for—with the exception of two or three episodes in the first act, brilliantly enlivened by the grotesque action of Messrs. Danvers and Roberts—it was depressingly dull throughout. The former gentleman's Scotch song, although its text was absolutely unintelligible to the "fause Southron," was indescribably exhilarating, and fairly took the house by storm. Nothing funnier has been heard in any London theatre within my remembrance. Scarcely less irresistibly laughter-moving was Mr. Roberts's first scene, which, however, owed its comic effects to his quaint pantomime and ingenious "gagging," rather than to any intrinsic humorously of the piece itself. But the deadly gloom of a long mock Submarine School Board examination, which occupied the greater part of the second act, and in which a scaly and wearisome Professor, injudiciously "made-up" to resemble Mr. Gladstone, bored a kindly audience to the utmost limit of its endurance, proved so distressingly depressing that I did not see how Lurline could possibly, for any length of time, bear such a crushing weight of tiresomeness on her shoulders. Nor did the third act afford any rebound, to speak of, from the collapse of the second. It was heavily handicapped by the meaningless babblings of an idiot peer (Mr. Moore looked the part to the life), and by several lengthy songs crammed with commonplaces, to which even Mr. Roberts failed to impart the least sparkle of gaiety. Indeed, but for

Miss P. Broughton's lithe dancing and the excellent singing of Miss Shirley and Miss Cameron, a catastrophe could hardly have been averted. These ladies kept the public in good humour, and saved the burlesque from summary condemnation.

"Lurline" has no plot worth mentioning ; it does not follow the lines of Barham's legend, and is somewhat too obviously a one-part piece. Its authors snap their fingers at the unities, and wallow in anachronisms. As writers of burlesque they are, no doubt, fully justified in so doing ; on condition, however, that their incongruities be mirth-provoking. That they have failed to observe this condition exposes them to legitimate reproach. On the other hand, the management has spared no pains or expense to please its clients in the front of the house. Picturesque scenery, exiguous costumes worn by young ladies of undeniable physical attractions, excellent chorous singing and melodious music, familiar to every English ear, make up an entertainment which—judging by results—manifestly contains all the elements of amusement that are congenial and attractive to a certain class of English theatre-going society.

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### "THE LILY OF LÉOVILLE."

A Comic Opera in Three Acts. Words by Felix Rémo and Alfred Murray. Lyrics by Clement Scott  
Music by Ivan Caryll. Performed for the first time in London at the Comedy Theatre, May 10, 1886.

Chevalier de Lauvenay	...	MR. BRACY.		Lascelles	...	...	MR. ASHFORD.
Coriolan...	...	MR. COFFIN.		Gabrielle de Léoville	...	...	MISS DELAPORTE.
Meridon...	...	MR. STEVENS.		Turlurette	...	...	MISS MELNOTTE.
Sergeant Rataplan	...	MR. KAYE.		Madame La Séche	...	...	MRS. VICTOR.
Lourdand	...	MR. RIGNOLD.		Jacquette	...	...	MISS BYRON.

Everybody who is musically and metrically inclined should hear "The Lily of Léoville." It is a rare treat to listen to such melodious, well-constructed music as M. Ivan Caryll's, and to lyrics so rife with poetical feeling and literary grace as Mr. Clement Scott's. There is not a dull or laboured musical number in the opera, M. Caryll's share in which is characterised throughout by genuine spontaneity and charming freshness. All Mr. Scott's verses attain a far higher standard than that which obtains in the vast majority of English *libretti*; whilst three of his songs, "If fickle Hope," "When Spring is gay," and "Golden Moon," are "as good as they make them" now-a-days; and a fourth, "Forget-me-not" might have been written by Herrick without causing the least prejudice to that surpassing lyrists bright renown. Moreover, the musical setting of these metrical gems is in every respect worthy of them. Mr. Murray's dialogue offers a grotesque contrast to M. Caryll's music and Mr. Scott's verses, being a tiresome compound of wishy-washy commonplaces and far-fetched word-plays. The English translator or "adapter" seems, indeed, to have dealt very hardly with M. Rémo's French text, which I have not been privileged to read, but which must have been lively and *spirituel*, unless it were curiously unlike the sparkling prose of such of this vivacious writer's works as have come under my notice. As for the plot of the "Lily of Léoville," it neither startles by its novelty nor overpowers by its robustness ; but it serves well enough as a string whereon to hang two

of three comic situations, and a score or so of delightful musical compositions. Few people now-a-days expect much in the way of coherent story in connection with comic opera ; or, if they do, they are foredoomed to disappointment. Dishonest guardians and love-sick wards, forged wills, and opportune documentary discoveries, obdurate peasant-fathers and their diplomatic daughters, imbecile martinets and pusillanimous bumpkins ; all these are the natural elements of an operetta "intrigue," and we must not grumble at their cropping up with unfailing regularity in works of that class. The personages of comic opera are only human in their outward appearance ; their thoughts, actions, words, and gestures are utterly unreal ; were any of these consistent with reason or even with probability they would bore audiences instead of diverting them. M. Remo's plot is no better and no worse than a dozen others that recur to my memory. I wish I could say as much for Mr. Murray's dialogue.

It is seldom that a dramatic or musical critic is able to praise a performance unreservedly, and yet conscientiously ; but I know of no greater pleasure derivable from the practice of the critical *métier*, and I gratefully own, on the present occasion, that I owe it to the actors and singers engaged in the production of "The Lily of Léoville." No opera within my remembrance has been better cast or more efficiently rendered. M. Van Biene's orchestra, for vigour and delicacy alike, may challenge competition on the part of any Continental band, not excluding that of the Wieden and the Friedrich Wilhelm ; and it is obviously gratifying to this accomplished conductor to deal with numbers so cleverly orchestrated and *entraînante*s as M. Caryll's. The chorus singing, too, is simply unexceptionable. Turning to the "principals," I rejoice to say that Miss Delaporte more than fulfils the high promise she put forward when I first heard her in the title-*rôle* of Mr. Herman's "Fay o' Five." She is now entitled to rank—and on a footing of perfect equality—with the very best *prime-donne* of comic opera in Europe. Here there is no one who can compare with her except Miss St. John. Her voice, of excellent quality, is flexible, well-trained, and thoroughly under her command ; her face and figure are singularly attractive ; her bearing on the stage is sprightly and unaffected ; she sings like an artist and speaks like a lady. Her first and last songs—the one a tender love-ditty, and the other a florid *aria di bravura*—are equally well delivered, and nightly elicit thunders of applause from the Comedy audiences. Miss Melnotte's dramatic intelligence and buoyant spirits enable her to impart vivid interest to a small part, which she renders with unflagging vivacity that never for an instant degenerates into vulgarity. Miss Byron is an uncommonly arch and "fetching" Jacquette ; whilst Mrs. Victor never fails to move her hearers to laughter when she speaks, sings, or indulges in broadly comic "business" as the amorous landlady of the "Little Corporal." Mr. Bracy sings delightfully, and looks all that an operatic hero should look in the romantic *rôle* of Georges de Lauvenay. Mr. Coffin's fine voice, irreproachable intonation, and engaging appearance have never been displayed to greater advantage than in his impersonation of a provincial poet,

songster, and *improvisatore*; Mr. Stevens makes a sufficiently sinister villain, Mr. Kaye an amusingly idiotic military veteran, Mr. Rignold a good pig-headed farmer, and Mr. Ashford a droll, cowardly clod-hopper.

It seems almost invidious to single out any particular musical number of the "Lily" for special praise, where all are so deserving of unstinted laudation; but I cannot forbear from calling attention to the extraordinary beauty and musical cleverness of the sextett and chorus, "Now to church," with which Act II. is brought to a conclusion. M. Caryll may boldly base his claim to be a musician of mark upon this truly admirable composition; and no one properly qualified to pronounce judgment upon the imaginative and constructive faculties of a musical composer will say him nay.

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During the past month London was delivered up, musically speaking, to the tender mercies of concert-givers, who had everything their own way, unvexed by rivalry on the part of Italian, German, French, or even English opera companies. Their audiences are by no means identical with those which attend performances of operetta and burlesque; wherefore the production of several novelties in these lines of entertainment was not to be held accountable for the exiguity of some of the gatherings assembled in our leading concert-rooms to listen to orchestral entertainments of the first class. I do not refer to the audiences of *matinées* given, "by kind permission," in private houses; these "morning-afternoons" always draw crowds of dead-heads, acquaintances of the *bénéficiaire* and friends of the assistant artistes, who make a good show, applaud freely, and justify the critic-in-waiting in recording the interesting fact that "Madame So-and-So's annual *matinée-musicale* was attended by a numerous, fashionable, and enthusiastic audience." The empty benches I have in my mind's eye were conspicuous last month at the opening concert of a yearly series which, until this year, has constituted one of the leading attractions of the London musical season—I mean the Richter concerts given at St. James's Hall. This falling off, which is certainly not attributable to any deterioration in the quality of the performances in question, may probably be accounted for by the circumstance that the metropolitan musical public is of late become somewhat less conservative in its likes and dislikes than it was a few years ago. Its capacity for hero-worship is as strong as ever—*testé* the reception accorded to Canon Liszt, of whose larger compositions the throngs that lionised him a few weeks ago knew next to nothing—but much less durable than of yore. It may be, too, that Richter's business advisers err in assuring him that the special character of his programmes is altogether sufficiently attractive to secure eight or ten "full houses" year after year; and that his regular repetition, in the course of each successive series, of certain orchestral works by Wagner, Liszt, and Beethoven does not deter many hundreds of paying music-lovers from attending his concerts. The argument of Richter's counsellors—an argument which he himself, I have reason to believe, considers to be

sound and convincing—is that the works in question require to be frequently heard in order to be adequately appreciated, and that the oftener they are performed the better their hearers like them. If the audiences that are content to pay fifteen shillings apiece for sofa-stalls to listen to an instrumental performance were exclusively composed of earnest musicians, I should say, with Richter, that such *morceaux* as the Tannhaeuser Overture, the Siegfried Idyll, the Meistersinger Vorspiel and Introduction to Act III., the Walkueren-Ritt, and Parsifal Selection—not forgetting the two Liszt Rhapsodies that he reproduces every season—cannot be played too often, seeing that they most undeniably improve upon acquaintance. But, as a matter of fact, audiences of the above class are considerably leavened by persons uninformed by a genuine taste for music; persons who say (and probably believe) that they “like” music; who are conservative in regard to plain-sailing rubbish and intolerant of intricate magnificence; who will listen a hundred times, with ever-increasing enjoyment, to “My Pretty Jane,” and are bored to death by a second hearing of the Choral Symphony; who incessantly crave for novelty in connection with great works, which they cannot understand, and fall into raptures over old familiar tenants of the barrel-organ. When these persons, belonging as they do in vast numbers to the worlds of wealth and fashion, find out that the Richter orchestra plays the same pieces year after year, they cease—or a good many of them cease—to subscribe to the series of concerts given annually by the illustrious Viennese Kapellmeister; and the vacancies caused by their defection are apparently not filled up by *dilettanti* of higher cultivation and stancher temper. In view of this stubborn fact, it is to be hoped that Dr. Hans will recognise the expediency of renovating his programmes by the aid of works less exclusively than heretofore drawn from one or two creative sources, thereby, so to speak, making a fresh bid for the extraordinary popularity he achieved in this metropolis a few years ago, but which appears to be at present on the wane.

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Madame De Fonblanque-Campbell's annual *matinée* is always an interesting event of the London musical season, being distinguished from the majority of entertainments *ejusdem generis* by the genuine worth of its programme attractions. This year the concert in question came off on the 14th ult. at Lady Abergavenny's town house in Dover Street, and was numerously attended. Seldom has the gifted *bénéficiaire*'s beautiful voice been heard to greater advantage. It has lost nothing of its pristine richness and sweetness, and is no less thoroughly under Mrs. Campbell's control than it was in her pre-nuptial days. Long ago Miss De Fonblanque's faultless tone-production, pure intonation, and refined musical intelligence placed her in the very front rank of English concert-room vocalists, and she continues to hold her own in that distinguished and enviable position. At her latest *matinée* she sang a new song by Mr. Wellings, called “Give me thy love,” with a taste and feeling that held her hearers spell-bound until the close of the melody, when they loudly

re-demanded it, and would not be denied. A similar mark of public favour was accorded to her for her sympathetic rendering of Gounod's somewhat hackneyed *Berceuse*. In conjunction with Miss Damian—another vocal artiste of whom this country has good reason to be proud—she interpreted Rubinstein's dainty duet, "Lied der Voeglein," in an entirely charming manner. Mr. Campbell may be sincerely congratulated upon the circumstance that his clever ballad, "When you and I were young," was introduced to public notice by so accomplished and splendidly endowed a singer as Miss Damian, whose superb voice was also well displayed in Gounod's effective song, "The Worker." Mr. Campbell himself sang a plagiaristic "aria" by Signor Mattei very well—much better, indeed, than it deserved—and took a highly effective part in several concerted pieces of more or less musical merit. Nothing could be more satisfactory to every musician present on the occasion referred to than Bernard Lane's singing of poor Freddy Clay's "Sands of Dee," one of that true melodist's most beautiful and touching inspirations. Of Isidore de Lara's delivery of "Mine to-day," "All my all," and "Je vais aimer" I have nothing new to say. It was, as it always has been since he first produced those charming works in public, absolute perfection. Madame De Fonblanque-Campbell was further assisted by Misses Lang, Larcom, and Waugh, the Chevalier Ganz, and Mr. Charles Marshall, all of whom supplied valuable contributions to the afternoon's entertainment. At Mr. and Mrs. Cheshire's "Morning Concert" (given, of course, during the afternoon) there was a copious display of skilful harpism and pianism by the concert-givers, ably supported by Mdlle. De Lido, the Countess Ali Sadowska, who recited the poem, "Three Mothers," with extraordinary spirit and feeling; Miss D'Alton, who moved the audience profoundly by her admirable rendering of Tosti's

"At Vespers" and Hope Temple's "Old Garden"; Mr. Barrington Foote, whose bright and tuneful singing of "Ask nothing more" and "The Three Beggars" elicited hearty and well-deserved applause; Messrs. Henderson, Webster, Yearsley, and Carli. On the whole, a good

a pleasant entertainment. The inimitable veteran Lindsay Sloper presided at the piano with the grace and efficiency that age, in his case, cannot dull, or custom stale.

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On the tenth of this month Adelina Patti will achieve her "heart's desire," that being the date fixed for her marriage to M. Ernest Nicolini, the well-known operatic tenor singer. The civil ceremony, as I am informed by the diva herself, will take place in Swansea, and the ecclesiastical rites will be celebrated in the church of the parish in which Craig-y-Nos Castle is situate. International guests have been bidden to the wedding in considerable number. Dr. Edward Hancklick, the first of living musical critics, is coming from Vienna; Léo Délibes, the composer of "Sylvia," "Coppelia," and "Lakmé," and François Magnard, the editor of "Figaro," from Paris; and several other musicians of fame from Italy and Germany. Splendid festivities will be held at the castle on the "Rock of Night," and the hearts of the neighbouring villagers will be

made glad by abundance of good food and drink, bands of music, open-air sports, and a magnificent display of fireworks. Three hundred poor school-children of the valley will, moreover, have substantial reasons to remember the "Good Fairy's" wedding-day for a year or two to come, it being her intention to rig them out afresh from top to toe on that joyful occasion, as well as to entertain them in the castle-grounds. Madame Patti's many friends in this country will rejoice to hear that she has returned from her long professional tour on the Continent in far better health than that which she enjoyed when she left England last November. During her absence abroad she cleared over £15,000, although her expenses were unusually heavy by reason of the great distances between the respective scenes of her operatic engagements, and earned a small fortune for her *impresario* to boot. Her successes in Portugal and Roumania were stupendous. At Lisbon, every place in the Royal Opera House was taken, and at unheard-of prices, for *eight* consecutive performances of "Carmen," she sustaining the title-*rôle*; and each night she was called before the curtain from thirty to forty times. Her triumphs in Bucharest have already been recorded in the columns of this magazine.

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Madame Ernest de Hesse-Wartegg (Minnie Hauk) concluded her Californian engagement at San Francisco on April 16 with a brilliant performance of the title-*rôle* in Massenet's "Manon," having previously achieved a series of splendid successes in the parts of Marguerite, Carmen, Selika, Zerlina, and Mignon. At the close of the third act of "Manon," on the above-mentioned occasion, Signor Arditi, acting as the mandatory of a committee of leading San Francisco citizens, presented to the accomplished prima donna a magnificent wreath of mimic laurel and oak leaves, executed in pure Californian gold, its branches being connected by a broad silvern riband, in the centre of which is set a large and beautiful specimen of the rich gold-quartz indigenous to the great Pacific State. The wreath was offered to Madame de Wartegg on a blue velvet cushion, to which was affixed a massive golden tablet bearing the inscription "To Minnie Hauk, from her admirers in San Francisco," and was accompanied by a masterpiece of art-calligraphy, couched in the following flattering terms:—"The undersigned, citizens of San Francisco, herewith have the honour to present you with a laurel wreath of Californian gold. They pray you to consider this offering as a token of their esteem and admiration, which you have so fully deserved by your artistic impersonations of leading operatic parts, *videlicet*, Carmen, Manon, Zerlina, Selika, Marguerite, and Mignon, during the opera season of 1886 at the Grand Opera House of San Francisco." When the intelligence of this tasteful and magnificent conferment reached me Madame de Wartegg had already left California *en route* for London, where she proposes to sojourn during the months of June and July. The San Francisco musical critics have written enthusiastically about the freshness and elasticity of her voice and the spirited intelligence of her acting. I hope the London public will be enabled by one or other of the chief

operatic *imprese* to hear and see her in some or her favourite *rôles*, for there are few vocal and dramatic artistes living whose performances are so thoroughly satisfactory as hers.

Amongst the newly-published music sent to me for notice during the past month are the following vocal and instrumental pieces, issued by the eminent firm of Chappell and Co., 50, New Bond Street. "An Even-song," words by Alice Lowthian, music by Caroline Lowthian. There must obviously be a large demand for compositions of this class, which have been suggested to so many English song-writers by Arthur Sullivan's "Lost Chord," or first-class London publishers would assuredly not put them in circulation. Intrinsic merit, for the most part, has but little to do with their production in type at the nominal price of four shillings apiece. This particular specimen of the devotional drawing-room lyric is neither less gloomy nor more original than its countless predecessors in that lugubrious line. I need scarcely say that it is written for a deep contralto voice—they all are.—"Love's Flight," written and composed by Lord Henry Somerset. This song, I observe, "may be sung without permission." That would appear to be the only intelligible inducement for its performance. The words are clumsy, ungrammatical, and plentifully larded with false metaphors; their setting is commonplace and platitudinarian. Song-writing is evidently not Lord Henry Somerset's speciality. He *must* be able to do something else better. Were he not a person of high rank and social position by birth, it might be worth his while to take into consideration Mark Twain's memorable suggestion, and expend his superfluous energy in chopping wood, combining that healthful pursuit—after the manner of a conspicuous cotemporary politician—with the practice of legislation.—"Mirage Valse" and "Short and Sweet" (polka), by Caroline Lowthian. The former is a really good dancing or singing waltz, provided with a strong and striking melody; the latter, a cheery polka enough, as such "compositions" go.—"Hesperus," a waltz by Luke Wheeler, will probably achieve popularity. It is tuneful, bright, and extremely catching. Of several other musical publications that have lately reached me I will say nothing in this place, except that I sincerely hope I may never be condemned to suffer the *peine forte dure* of listening to them.

WM. BEATTY-KINGSTON.



## Our Play=Box.

### "THE PICKPOCKET."

A new farcical comedy, in three acts and four scenes, adapted from the German by GEORGE P. HAWTREY.  
Produced at the Globe Theatre, on Saturday, April 24, 1886.

Gregory Grumbledon ...	Mr. W. J. HILL.	Inspector of Police ...	Mr. NORMAN BENT.
Frederick Hope ...	Mr. E. J. HENLEY.	James ...	Mr. HIDER.
Osmund Hewett ...	Mr. C. H. HAWTREY.	Freda Grumbledon ...	Miss VANE FEATHERSTON.
Mr. Walter Johnson ...	Mr. T. SQUIRE.	Mrs. Hope ...	Miss CISSY GRAHAME.
Dr. Shaw ...	Mr. A. G. ANDREWS.	Annette ...	Miss GARCIA.
Andrew ...	Mr. W. S. PENLEY.	Miss Maria Trumper ...	Mrs. LEIGH MURRAY.

"The Pickpocket" is called a farcical comedy, but it is simply one of the flimsiest farces ever put upon the stage, and there is not a trace of the comedy element in it. Other writers of these three-act farces are content to call them by their right names, and Mr. G. P. Hawtrey should cut the word comedy out of the playbill. It is said to be adapted from the German, but the original piece was hardly worth transferring to the English stage, if "The Pickpocket" gives us a fair idea of it. The story runs in this wise: Mr. Frederick Hope, a jealous husband, follows his wife down to Southbourne-on-Sea, because he suspects a young man, Osmund Hewett, has gone after her. In order to watch her unobserved, Mr. Hope disguises himself and takes the name of Johnson, and that happens to be the designation of a lunatic, who, with his keeper, is expected at the watering-place. What more natural than that Mr. Hope should be taken for the maniac, for his jealousy makes him very irritable, and much more fun might be obtained from this misunderstanding than Mr. Hawtrey manages for us. Hewett has come down in chase of Freda Grumbledon, a young lady who is staying at Soutlibourne with her uncle, Gregory Grumbledon, who imagines himself a great invalid. Here the crowning joke of the piece comes in, for Mr. Hewett persuades Grumbledon that he can cure him by *massage*, puts him on two chairs, and proceeds to knead him like bread. When the reader knows that the part of Grumbledon is taken by Mr. W. J. Hill, he will see what a refined and humorous incident is thus introduced. It seems that Mrs. Hope is suspicious that Johnson is her husband. She employs Hewett to get hold of his handkerchief and look at his luggage, which leads him to be suspected of being a pickpocket, but nothing comes of it. All is afterwards explained, and what an able critic has justly called a "very empty piece of buffoonery," comes to an end. Nor does the dialogue, though occasionally smart, atone for the weakness of the plot. As Dr. Johnson said of "The Rehearsal," "It has not wit enough to keep it sweet." As to the acting, Mr. Hill looked very comic as the old invalid, but as a mere excrescence in the story, while Mr. Penley has allotted to him the small part of a waiter. He makes a very

clever bit of character of it, but the *rôle* is unworthy of him. Mr. E. J. Henley sadly overacted the part of Frederick Hope. He made the whole play impossible, and no man conducting himself so absurdly would have been allowed to be at large for an hour. Mr. C. H. Hawtrey was successful in making Osmond Hewett what it is to be supposed the author meant him to be, as offensive a cad as ever deserved to be kicked out of a drawing-room. Mr. A. G. Andrews may be commended as the doctor, and Mr. Squire did all that was possible with the very shadowy part of Mr. Johnson, who might surely, with much advantage to the plot, have been made a more important personage. Miss Cissy Grahame had but little to do as Mrs. Hope, but did that little pleasantly and well; Miss Vane Featherston played brightly and prettily as Freda Grumbledon, and Mrs. Leigh Murray gave due effect to the part of Hope's maiden aunt. The scenery was adequate, and the piece went briskly, while it is only fair to say that it was much applauded on the first night, though there were loud sounds of disapprobation as well, on the fall of the curtain. One would imagine that a piece which derives the chief part of its humour from the rotundity of Mr. Hill's figure would soon pall on the public, but it would be rash to prophesy concerning the career of "The Pickpocket." It may be said, however, that if it does run, the art of writing a successful play is much easier than some of us have thought it.

H. SAVILE CLARKE.

### "CLITO."

An original tragedy, in five acts, by Sydney Grundy and Wilson Barrett  
Produced at the Princess's Theatre on Saturday, May 1, 1886.

Clito .....	Mr. WILSON BARRETT.	Corax .....	Mr. W. A. ELLIOTT.
Helle .....	Miss EASTLAKE.	Elius .....	Mr. H. DE SOLLA.
Glaucias.....	Mr. E. S. WILLARD.	Irene .....	Miss CARRIE COOTE.
Critias .....	Mr. CHARLES HUDSON.	Chloe .....	Miss EVA WILSON.
Theramines .....	Mr. AUSTIN MELFORD.	Selene .....	Miss GARTH.
Xenocles .....	Mr. J. H. CLYNDS.	Neone .....	Miss ALICE BELMORE.
Dares .....	Mr. C. FULTON.	Libya .....	Miss BYRON.
Atys .....	Mr. S. M. CARSON.		

In the midst of the scene of wild enthusiasm which greeted "Clito" on the first night of its production it was difficult to form an unbiased opinion of this daring play. Calm reflection, away from the glamour of the footlights, however, makes the task comparatively easy. Mr. Sidney Grundy and Mr. Wilson Barrett have given us a story terribly true and realistic; a page of life with all the bloom rubbed off, where woman's infamy and man's guilty weakness are shown to us in all their nakedness. Truly the manager charms our eyes with exquisite stage pictures, gorgeous stage appointments, and beautiful and artistic dresses. The acting is admirable, the construction of the play good, and the treatment vigorous to a fault. This in great part carried away the audience, for the story is told so swiftly that it absolutely gives the spectator no breathing time, but keeps him at fever heat unto the very end. No doubt a note of warning is sounded to the too self-reliant, who think they cannot fall; and no one can say this play is immoral, for woman and man meet their punishment in the shape most terrible to each—she by the loss of life, he by the loss of honour and self-esteem. Yet what is

gained by this sorry spectacle of how low poor humanity may fall? Though luxurious Athens in its days of pomp and shame is brought before our eyes, making one's brain dizzy with its heavily-scented air of revelry, we come out of this unhealthy atmosphere untainted it is true, for vice appears to us in its most abject and repulsive form, but deeply saddened to think there are women so lost to shame that one can feel no pity for them. Why put aside the doctrine that there is some little particle of good left in the worst of women or men? If it be not an entirely true one, it is at least a consoling one. Every true woman would like to feel that her erring sisters are not past all redemption. Truly the world is hard and uncharitable enough; why help to give the scoffers the right to sneer? There is much in real life that is bad and despicable, much that forces itself upon one, and goes far to dispel one's illusions; still there is much good and some poetry left. Aye, I maintain it, even in our ordinary every-day life there is a tinge of poetry; and if true and pure women and noble and honest men are in the minority, as many would have us believe, all the more reason why they should be brought to our notice. We are all over-anxious to hide the diseases of the body; why should we gloat over those of the mind, which are far more hideous? If we know of them we ought to be anxious to forget that such things are, and the few who are happy enough to be ignorant of the seamy side of life should not be cruelly awakened to it. The story runs thus:—

Athens is groaning under the rule of the Thirty Tyrants (404 B.C.), but the hate of the people is especially directed against the mistress of Critias, Helle the beautiful, the accursed. One alone in this corrupt city has dared to express his opinion of her publicly, and this is the young sculptor Clito, who has never chanced to see her. His words have been reported to Helle, who burns to revenge herself. As a first step, she causes the award in a competition for a statue to be given to another sculptor, though Clito had all the votes in his favour. This is but poor satisfaction to her cat-like ferocity; but she finds willing counsel in an old admirer, the profligate young Glaucias. He has seen Clito's foster-sister, and Irene (another Virginia) has found favour in his eyes. Glaucias and Helle make a compact: he will help her to be revenged on Clito, and she will help him to get Irene in his power. They are still planning when Irene appears, seeking her father, the old sculptor Xenocles, whom she expects to find at work on the pedestal of the forthcoming statue; he has already gone, however, and Helle and Glaucias, seizing this opportunity, speak kindly to the girl, and Helle bids her follow one of her slaves, who will lead her to where her father has gone. The confiding Irene is soon handed over to a jailer; but she is encountered by Clito, who rouses the people in a fine speech, and demands of Critias that she should be set at liberty. Critias, advised by his counsellor, Theramenes, deems it prudent to give way to the angry populace. "It was a mistake," he says; "she is free." So ends the first act. The next takes us to Clito's studio; the young man brings back Irene to her father's arms, and he tells them that the people, roused at last, are preparing for rebellion, and have chosen him as their leader. Clito again flings curses at Helle, little

heeding the warning of Xenocles, who tells him that this dangerous syren is so beautiful that she seems "half angel, half devil"; this impetuous youth dares fate, and declares such a woman could never bring him under her sway. Left alone with Irene, he extols his love of art, and art alone. Irene looks upon Clito as the embodiment of all that is good and noble; to him her pure young heart has been secretly given, but he looks upon her as a sister only: though the young man is by no means too modest to have perceived the impression he has made, and when poor Irene, under covered words, expresses her sadness at being so little to him, he tells her the story of Psyche, who, not content with the happiness that fell to her lot, yearned for more and lost all, no doubt comparing himself to the god. All this self-satisfied preaching is not pleasing in one who soon proves himself so weak. At Irene's request, he also describes his ideal woman, indeed, an ideal alone could be so perfect. Alas! as Glaucias remarks later on, "Art is immortal, but artists are mortal." At the latter's instigation, Helle has decided that the best revenge will be to make Clito infamous in the eyes of the patriots. She visits his studio under an assumed name, presenting herself as a patroness of Art, and gives Clito a sitting for her portrait. Her sensuous beauty fires the soul of the artist, and kindles the passion of the man; the young boaster is caught in the toils even before the syren has woven her net around him. She leaves him in an enthusiastic trance; but when Xenocles, on his return, tells him that the woman he has sketched is Helle, he flings the panel down, and tramples it under foot. This is but a vain attempt to deceive himself; it is not Helle's image which he has flung in the dust, but his own soul, which, rudely torn from its Olympian heights of ideal dreams, he has cast at the feet of the courtesan. In the third act, we find that on his way to meet the other patriots, he goes to Helle's house or the purpose, so he tells himself, of upbraiding her. In his conversation with her in his studio, he had inadvertently told her of the meeting, and it had been arranged between her, Critias, and Glaucias, that soldiers should be sent to disperse the people with their swords, telling them that Clito had turned traitor. Meanwhile, she is to detain him, for well she knows that he will come, by using her power of fascination on him, and enticing him to partake of some drugged wine. Alas! poor fool, when he has flung at her curses that only amuse her, while they torture him to utter, she has only to call herself the victim of slander and envy to find a ready listener. Clito's weakness asserts itself at this juncture, but his redeeming point lies in the words spoken by Helle to Critias shortly before: "These pure, honest men see in the woman they love the reflection of their own soul," and are easily and willingly deceived. She acknowledges to Clito that appearances are against her, but all her supposed victims were disappointed persecutors; throughout, she has remained chaste and pure, and never loved till now. In broken accents she protests that she loves him, and him alone; that her one dream of joy would be to be his humble wife; she clings to him, and appeals to him with soft, endearing, and despairing words; and when, in a last struggle with himself, he tries to tear himself away and leave her, with a stifled cry and heart-breaking sobs

she falls like one who has received a death-blow—and he stays. The fourth act, a masterpiece of stage effect, is the most unpalatable; it is a sorry sight to find that Clito, still her guest, has forgotten friends, countrymen, duty, in this feverish dream of love. 'Tis true he still believes in her; he longs to take her away from the company of such men as Critias and Glaucias, and entreats her to redeem her promise to be his wife, and leave this life of revels. But granting that Clito sincerely thinks that cruel fate and not her choice has thrown Helle into such evil company, can he truly believe in the virtue of such a woman, who, when she wins the true love of an honest man, still hesitates to fly from such a life, and grasp the helping hand that is held out to her? Such willing blindness may be true to life, but if it is so, it is a lamentable sight, one that one would rather not dwell upon. By this time Helle is tired of playing a part, and Xenocles, who had repeatedly been refused admittance, is now allowed to have an interview with his adopted son. Clito learns how he has been made a traitor to his countrymen, but refuses to believe that Helle has had a hand in the deception, and Xenocles leaves him in despair. But the veil soon falls off his eyes. Helle herself undeceives him, and rails at him with her companions, pouring all the venom of her despicable nature on this man she so hates. At this juncture Irene, deceived by a message purporting that she has been sent for by Clito, arrives, and is eagerly greeted by Glaucias. Clito interposes furiously, and Helle, pretending to protect the girl, bids a slave to take her to her chamber and make the door fast; but while Clito, kneeling at her feet, exclaims, "For this one mercy be all thy sins forgiven," she hands the key to her accomplice in devilry. But Xenocles, who has already missed his daughter and roused the citizens, now breaks in with them to rescue her, to find only her dead body, for on their approach Glaucias has stabbed Irene, to silence her cries for help. Retribution follows at once, for Clito kills Glaucias with his own dagger. We might have been spared all these revolting details which close the act, Helle's fiendish outburst would have been a powerful climax, less painful to witness than the ensuing scene. On the first night, the audience at this point were wrought to such a pitch of excitement, that they very evidently looked to the last act with the apprehension that it must fall flat after what had gone before; but when it was found that this was not the case, this had much to do with the enthusiastic recall of the authors. Clito has been dragged back to his house by the people, who intend to call him to account, after they have captured Helle; they leave him, knowing well he will not seek to escape. Nemesis has filled his cup with the bitterest retribution. His honour lost by his own folly, his idol shattered, degraded in his own estimation, sullied in his love, what does he care for punishment or death? But his cup of sorrow and shame is not yet full; he has still to see how abject and loathsome a thing is the woman who has brought about his downfall. Helle, abandoned by all her friends, hounded to death by the mob, comes to the man she has wronged, and asks him to save her. She grovels at his feet in abject terror: to her, shame and infamy are nothing;

but life—life at any price. At first Clito reviles her ; but shows her a way by which she may escape. Too late ! The mob returns, and, infuriated at finding them together, sets upon them with their daggers. On seeing Helle dead, Clito, who has received his death-blow, utters a cry of pain—for some shadow of his great love still clings to his poor, torn heart—and he dies, forgiven by his father. And thus ends this daring play, which has taken the public by storm. As a first attempt at blank verse, Mr. Sydney Grundy has done wonders ; not that he shines in being poetical, but he has colour, incisive sarcasm, and, occasionally, a tinge of wit. Vigour is no doubt a quality, but it should not be carried to the length of bluntness, or of being crudely outspoken ; and into this fault Mr. Grundy has often fallen during the course of this clever play. The acting deserves all praise. Mr. Wilson Barrett's indomitable energy and vigour of style are the very requisites of the impetuous and youthful Clito. Few actors are so at home in the classic garb as Mr. Barrett, and his declamatory powers in a part which contains long and energetic speeches are of the greatest service to the play. To be truthful, Mr. Barrett's elocution on the first night was not quite what we are accustomed to expect from him, his delivery being, at times, far too rapid and forced ; but he was evidently labouring under strong emotion and anxiety, which the responsibility of such a production fully warranted. Such failings, incidental to a first night, are inevitable where the actor is author and manager as well. I have seldom seen Mr. Barrett so moved. But he feels his part, which, I am confident, will prove one of his best, showing both power and pathos ; his conception is good, and his rendering full of fire. Mr. E. S. Willard has never done anything better than Glaucias ; he has but little to say, but every sentence tells, and the impersonation is highly finished. Mr. J. H. Clyndes had some fine speeches to deliver as Xenocles, and infused some true feeling into his utterances ; unfortunately, this was to some extent marred by a tendency to rant. Mr. Charles Hudson and Mr. Austin Melford were both very good. Miss Carrie Coote makes a pretty Irene, but is quite overweighted by the part ; this is unfortunate, for this sweet, pure girl should captivate our interest. The success of Helle should not be mistaken. It was not the development of the character, in all its subtlety and viciousness, that was followed with breathless interest, powerfully as it is delineated ; it was the display of histrionic power shown by the actress. Miss Eastlake took her greatest admirers by surprise ; she rose to such unexpected heights that the attention was riveted by the great art of her impersonation. The irritability, ferocity, and depravity of the woman ; the softness, the irresistible charm, the fascinating tenderness she can assume at will ; her abject terror when death is near ; all these strong contrasts are depicted with an artistic skill that could not be surpassed. With this new character, the most difficult she has yet attempted, the young actress has raised herself, at one bound, to the very first rank of her profession. But one shudders to think that such women as Helle exist. “Clito” is eminently a two-part play, but the smallest of characters are in good hands ; indeed, it is the excellence of the stagecraft throughout the play

that will continue to run away with the spectator's judgment. I do not mean that such a play will do great harm to those who see it; for the authors have shown us that vice in the lap of luxury, and surrounded with all the good things of this world, is yet so repulsive that we do not for a moment entertain any other feeling but that of loathing. But is familiarity with such things productive of much good? Surely, as I said before, little is gained by such an admirable display of art when the moral to be gathered from it is that we live in a bad world, where men of lofty minds and noble hearts can be turned away from the right path by the wiles of dangerous, bad women, while the women who strive to be good, pure, and high-minded are looked upon with indifference or scarcely recognised! Some there are who may fairly maintain that this last point is the very saddest, and most to be regretted, in what is suggested by this realistic play.

MARIE DE MENSIAUX.

### “THE CENCI.”

A Tragedy in Five Acts, by PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

First represented, by the Shelley Society, at the Grand Theatre, Islington, on Friday, afternoon, May 7, 1886.

Beatrice Cenci .....	Miss ALMA MURRAY.	Orsino's Servant.....	Mr. CECIL RAMSEY.
Lucretia, Countess Cenci	Miss MAUDE BRENNAN.	Prince Colonna .....	Mr. J. D. BOUVERIE.
Count Francesco Cenci	Mr. HERMANN VEZIN.	First Guest .....	Mr. FRED WESTWOOD.
Orsino .....	Mr. LEONARD S. OUTRAM.	Second Guest .....	Mr. HARRY GRATTON.
Cardinal Camillo .....	Mr. W. FARREN, jun.	Third Guest.....	Mr. H. LINTON.
Giacomo Cenci .....	Mr. R. DE CORDOVA.	A Guest .....	Mr. E. H. PATERSON.
Bernardo Cenci .....	Mr. MARK AMBIENT.	Judge .....	Mr. F. HOPE MERISCORD.
Savella .....	Mr. PHILLIP BEN GREET.	Second Judge.....	Mr. A. J. MATTHEWS.
Marzio .....	Mr. G. R. FOSS.	Officer .....	Mr. W. T. PERCIVAL.
Olimpio.....	Mr. W. R. STAVELEY.	Noble Ladies .....	{ Mrs. COMPTON READ. Miss BYRON, etc.
Andrea .....	Mr. CECIL CROFTON.		

This was the first and probably the last performance of the most repulsive play that has been produced this century. For even if the enthusiastic members of the Shelley Society purposed again acting “The Cenci,” it is more than likely that a repetition of the tragedy in anything like so public a manner as that accorded to it at Islington would be forbidden by the licenser of plays, inasmuch as the payment of a guinea to the Shelley Society constitutes membership, and, consequently, the privilege of witnessing its stage representations. The guinea a year also entitles the subscriber to bring a friend to each performance. This attempt to evade the law is somewhat similar to that practised in the old days of unlicensed theatres, when a charge was made for admission to a concert, the theatrical entertainment being “given gratis by persons for their diversion!” Such an excuse would avail but little now, and the Shelley Society, we may rest assured, would hardly venture upon a second presentation of a tragedy which has no excuse for its existence. “To excite pity and terror” is doubtless a laudable ambition on the part of a poet, but it is not the all in all of a tragedy. Tragedy should ennoble; it should, as Messrs. Alfred and Buxton Forman rightly urge, purify the passions. But no elevation of the mind, no purification, can arise from the contemplation of that which is mere horror and abomination, unrelieved by sympathy. It is diffi-

cult to see where good can come from working on the vile criminal passion of a man who is little short of a monster—a man in outward semblance only—and the consequences of his loathsome degradation. There would have been some slight excuse for this sad exhibition had Shelley's play contained any grand language, any lofty thought, or any special theatrical effectiveness. But in none of these respects is it noteworthy. Its "word-painting" has no particular excellence, and, regarded as a stage play, it is positively ineffective. The construction is throughout weak, displaying a very inexperienced hand indeed; the real climax to the piece, the death of the Count Cenci, strongly reminds one of the murder scene in "Macbeth"; but even after this imitation of Shakespeare the greater parts of two acts are occupied by the heroine, whom everyone knows to be guilty of her father's murder, proclaiming her innocence of it; and Beatrice also strongly asserts at one time that she has been foully outraged, while on another occasion she declares herself to be spotless as the driven snow. These are blemishes that ought to be patent to those least inexperienced in the matter of plays; and yet "The Cenci" is acted, despite the repulsive nature of its story, its weakness of language, and its absolute unfitness, in other respects, for representation on the stage. And all to do honour to Shelley. Honour, forsooth! The only result of this silly experiment of the Shelley Society has been to bring dishonour down on the devoted head of their departed hero, whose name must henceforward be recorded in theatrical annals in conjunction with the least reputable of its records. To those who respect the stage and sympathise with its more laudable efforts, it must be a matter of sincere congratulation that this injudicious step received but scant support from those directly connected with the theatre.

AUSTIN BRERETON.

### "HELENA IN TROAS."

By John Todhunter. Adapted for the Stage and produced by E. W. Godwin,  
At Hengler's Circus, arranged as a Greek Theatre,  
On Monday Afternoon, May 17, 1886.

Priam.....	Mr. HERMANN VEZIN.	Elder of Troy .....	Mr. FRED WESTWOOD.
Paris .....	Mr. H. BEERBOHM TREE.	Archer .....	Mr. H. PAGET.
Hecuba .....	Miss LUCY ROCHE.	Tirewoman to Hecuba ...	Mrs. LOUISE JOPLING.
Helena .....	Miss ALMA MURRAY.	Handmaidens to Helena {	Miss HARE and Mrs. OSCAR WILDE.
Œnone .....	Mrs. BEERBOHM TREE.		OSCAR WILDE.

#### CHORUS.

Leader—Miss KINNAIRD.

Miss J. CONNELL, Miss C. CONNELL, Miss CRANFORD, Miss A. FREEMAN, Miss GOODE, Miss D. GOODE, Miss GILCHRIST, Miss S. LEE, Miss LEVESON, Miss ROBERTS, Miss IDA ROBERTS, Mrs. ROHAN, Mrs. SELBY LUARD, Miss B. SKUDDER, Miss JANETTE STEER.

At certain fitful periods breezes of artistic sentiment sweep over our London life. We have had a craze for the fashions and furniture of the late Queen Ann, for the doings and thoughts of the Renaissance, for the "Second Empire," and now we are Greek—very Greek. Sweet modern maidens who this time last year were probably playing lawn-tennis, or drifting past Cliveden Woods, have suddenly changed their flannels for sweeping draperies. Well-modelled, white

arms, that were wont to wield a rein, a racquet, or sculls, are slowly uplifted in rhythmic sway as the solemn chant arises from the smoking thymele. Swift feet that used to swing to the pulsations of the last new valse now tread in sandalled silence over mosaics and marbles; mirthful eyes are filled with mournful mystery, and clear young voices no longer laugh, but bewail the woes of Troy in most melancholy music. For the moment the triumph of the Peplum over the Petticoat is absolute. Who hath done all this? That recognised authority, Mr. E. W. Godwin. He said, "Let there be Greeks"—and there are Greeks, and very charming Greeks too. I find no fault with him, for, of all the floating artistic breezes, this last, that seems to sweep to us from the Ægean Sea, and bring with it the curl of the ripples that murmur to the sands of Salamis, is possibly the best. At all events, it shows society what a beautiful thing Dignity is. It is a solemn protest against pertness, and in the whirl and rush we are grateful for the restfulness and quick and severe earnestness such an artistic effort brings us.

There are four ideas to be considered concerning this production—the drama, the designer, the actor, and the music. Mr. Todhunter's play is a very thoughtful and intellectual poem, containing passages of much literary beauty, and a sympathetic sense of that sad dread of death, and the terrible vengeance that Love brings with it that we find in all Greek plays. For all that, it is not a strong acting play, and, saving to scholarly souls and artistic eyes, is somewhat dreary. The absolute impossibility of hearing a single word, the chorus sang was against its success; but, even with book in hand, the events hardly stirred us. We admired the poetry, but cared little for the play. There is an obscurity about that really strong moment of the kiss that I cannot penetrate. Paris, who is dying of his wound, sends for his old love, Cœnone, whose magic skill alone can save him. Frankly the nymph tells him that she can and will save him if his love for her has come back; the prescription can only heal if the patient is true. This passage is a fine example of the author's spirit, and I quote it:—

PARIS. Yet heal me, Cœnone! Give me back my life—  
Perchance my spring, which seems to breathe from thee,  
Which seems to whisper in my dying ear  
Regrets, desires —! Quick, quick, put forth thy power  
Before it be too late! Cœnone, O love!  
Put forth thy power, and give me back my spring!

CœNONE. O false Paris! false love! Swear thou art true,  
And I'll believe it. But be true to me!  
Withered thy spring, I'll pour the bliss of youth  
Through all thy parched veins. But swear to me,  
When all my pride is melted into love,  
And all my love in one tumultuous wave  
Of healing hath uplifted thee from death,  
The Spartan shall not have thee—swear to me!

PARIS. Bind me not with vain oaths but potent love;  
And if thou hast the love, put forth the power.

CœNONE. The power lies in my lips; but O, beware

If thou art parleying with a double thought ;  
 If her imperious vision comes to dash  
 The mystery of our lips, then thou art lost.

PARIS. Quick, let me make the ordeal of thy lips !  
 Sorceress ! I am twice Death's fool ! Come, Helen, come !

ŒNONE. False, false, utterly false ! utterly lost !  
 Alas ! poor trickster of thyself, I have given  
 My holiest fountains to thy scorching thirst,  
 Because I loved as never woman man ;  
 All, knowing thy false heart—in vain ! in vain !  
 Back to thy Helen—let her save thee now !

At the words “ordeal of thy lips” they kiss. No healing is the result of the poor Œnone’s pouring forth of her “holiest fountains,” for Paris, in his secret heart, loves Helen. Now, he must have known that fact and the conditions of the magic cure; yet he promptly “rounds on” the hapless Œnone with scorn and “sorceress!” He knew in his weak heart he could not pay the stipulated fee—the very essence of his recovery—and then blames the physician. I never thought much of Paris as I met him in the “Iliad,” and generally rejoiced when sturdier and braver men abused him roundly. I think even less of the effeminate sensualist now.

The designer’s work is altogether excellent. Mr. Godwin has given beauty, unity, and harmony to the details of archæology. His theatre was strictly accurate, his classical lore severe; yet his treatment was poetical, and not pedantic. The critics have given many lovely and enthusiastic descriptions of the beautiful scene, and I would only add one point. The final exit of the chorus, as they slowly mount the double steps leading to the stage, was more than beautiful, more than “Alma-Tadamesque.” With such extraordinary skill of stage management and delicate feeling was the movement managed that it was wondrously pathetic. There was a strange sense of sorrow in the “Dead March” of these broken-hearted girls as they slowly moved from our sight and faded away like the phantoms of some sad dream, from which we wake in tears.

Thirdly, as to the acting. It was very earnest and well-intentioned but of fire and passion there was none. With the exception of Mr. Vezin’s powerful notion of King Priam (in his hands all such strange parts are necessarily “safe”), there was no relief, no colour, no humanity. The delivery was slow, monotonous, and dull; the voices were the voices of many curates whining out many “second lessons.” Stilted pauses—useless, meaningless pauses—weighted the poetry. As in the recent production of “The Cenci,” there seemed to have gone forth an edict that there must be a sort of “interval for refreshment” between every word in a sentence, and a full *entr’acte* between the sentences themselves. Very frequently this pause took place at the end of a line, when the sense would urge the voice to go on and complete the idea. The irritating sense of “drag” this method produced cannot be explained away by any talk concerning majesty, and dignity, and repose. The people in the play are human people, and

should have varying methods for various emotions ; but they all took their speeches in the same monotonous *andante*. A skilled and graceful writer in a contemporary of May 22nd justly tells us that "the two things the Greeks valued most in actors were grace of gesture and music of voice" (so do we of this day, I take leave to say, and, what is more, we do not shout through masks) ; but, while I admit the grace of gesture, I deny that monotony is "music." Inflection, spirit, play of feeling, requires contrast of what music-makers call *tempi*. There is no evidence to be procured about the matter ; but I, for one, stoutly refuse to believe that the stars of the Sophoclean (I mean Sophoklean) or Euripidean companies intoned their speeches like Gregorian chants. If this is indeed the "grand style," that requires applause to be hushed by an irritated Professor for fear of "marring by any moderation of expression the calm majesty of Melpomene," then my passionate faith in the life and art-loving, joyous Athenians is sorely shaken, and I see how clearly, how wise it was of the W. S. Gilbert-Aristophanes spirit of the day to shake them up and burlesque them in baskets. The beautiful hand-maidens and tire-women and the resting chorus, who had nothing to say, but only to exist and be beautiful, were often more pleasing than the preaching Protagonists. However, for sound and earnest effort to produce this, to my thinking, most deplorable "grand style," praise is due to Mr. and Mrs. Beerbohm-Tree and Miss Alma Murray, who shows fine intellectuality in all she does.

Of the music, the least said the better. If the "invention of the diatonic scale" produced such gruesome growls as this, better by far that the human ear and mind had never learnt to sympathise with semi-tones. Wagnerian "motives" would have been intelligible and wise ; and this type of treatment—this method of providing Greek music, of which we really know very little—has been recently offered to us with success by Dr. C. V. Stanford in his music to "The Eumenides" of Æschylus at Cambridge, reproduced at the last Richter Concert.

Greek art in the sense of beauty of form, movement, dress, and calm dignity we must reverently admire to the end of time ; but the human ear has developed in sensitiveness more than the human eye. It will probably still further develope, and no mistaken sense of enthusiasm can make us of this century violate our inherited musical culture by pretending to admire pretentious discordancy.

External objects—the external beauties of form and colour—have been before the eyes of all nations and all times. The stars glitter to us as they did to the Greeks ; they saw the colours and shapes of things as we do ; but there is no such thing as music in nature—the sweetest song bird sings unscientifically. Music—traditionally the only art the angels practice in heaven—is evolved from the innermost mysteries of man's own nature. It has no counterpart outside his own mind ; and seeming that the High Priests and Stewards of this

mystery, have brought it to its present power and magnificence, it is false art to seek for its earliest and ugliest form.

It is right to indicate these things, and it only remains to congratulate the Neo-Hellenists on their sincerity. The beautiful movement will go on, and as its severity diminishes and our tastes grow attuned to it, we shall find ourselves insensibly assisting in a Nineteenth Century Renaissance, wherein even critics may grow gentle.

W. C. K. WILDE.

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To understand the design of a Greek theatre as imitated for the production of Mr. Todhunter's play, a brief glance at the historical development of the Greek drama is very helpful. This once understood, the relations between the narrow upper stage, or proscenium, and the broad, almost circular, lower stage, or orchestra, become clear. Just as the Elizabethan drama was evolved from the rude mysteries of the middle ages, the Greek drama was evolved from the still ruder ceremonies of the early worship of Bacchus. Both had a religious origin; but while the English drama becomes completely secularised, the Greek to the last retained much of its sacred character, typified by the altar, or *thymele*, in the centre of the lower stage.

We must look for the crude origins of the Greek drama in the merry-makings at festivals, in spring time, and at grape harvest and vintage festivals in honour of the lusty god Bacchus, god of mounting sap and foaming wine, god of that rejoicing life in all things so keenly felt by the Greek spirit. Out of these merry-makings arose the rude games in which young men would contend for the prize of a goat (the victim sacrificed to Bacchus) with songs extemporised in honour of the god, and dances around his altar. The very word tragedy keeps in its etymology (*τράγος*, a goat, *ῳδε*, a song) the memory of their old goat-songs. Then come contentions of rival poets, and the gradual evolution of the choral ode, so mighty an instrument in the hands of Æschylus and his successors. Arion, of Corinth, is said to have invented the dithyrambic dance and song. Then dialogues were introduced in the pauses of the choric song and out of these dialogues the drama was developed. The chorus of Thespis performed a solemn dance upon a raised platform with an altar in the centre. Then a small, higher stage was introduced, first for a single performer, who held dialogues with the leader of the chorus, and by degrees this small stage increased in dimensions until it ran right across the stage for the chorus, from which it cut off a segment, thus forming a double stage of somewhat horse shoe form. Upon the upper stage the business of the drama was transacted, while the chorus, which represented the sacred and moral element, remained below, ideal spectators of the tragic action, and mediators between the heroic personages contending against fate and the gods, angry or favourable. Hence, the importance of the chorus, which never sank to the level of a band of supernumeraries, but took an imposing part in the unfolding of the drama, which was divided by the choral odes into sections somewhat corresponding to the

acts of a modern play. The number of the chorus seems to have varied at different times, and with different poets ; fifteen, not including the leader, is that adopted in the production of Mr. Todhunter's play.

In the performances of Greek plays at the Universities the conditions have been so unfavourable for anything like an exact reproduction of the structural characters of the ancient Greek theatre that possibly many persons of considerable classical culture may have come away with an erroneous impression as to the actual form of such a theatre, and the relative proportions of the upper stage to the lower. In the late performance of the "Eumenides" at Cambridge, for instance, interesting and impressive as it undoubtedly was, one could not help feeling that the chorus was miserably cramped upon a stage actually smaller than that on which the protagonists moved. It was at once too prominent and too unimportant—too prominent in being thrust up so as almost to conceal the upper stage, as it passed to and fro in its choric movements, too unimportant when, in the intervals between the choral odes, it was thrust against the side-walls, like a regiment of operatic supernumeraries.

It was a happy thought to produce an original play in Greek form for the benefit of our National School of Archæology at Athens, and a still happier one to produce it in a building like Hengler's Circus, which lends itself in the most obvious way, now that he has discovered it, to the transformation which Mr. E. W. Godwin has made so commendably. Here we have no confusion between the denizens of the upper and lower stages, no partial occultations of protagonists by chorus. The chorus moved, at a level some four feet below that of the proscenium, over an orchestra of dimensions almost exactly equal to those of the model theatre of ancient Greece, whose ruins still scar the slopes of the Acropolis. When not singing, its members were disposed in graceful groups around the *thymele*, or on the steps leading to the upper stage.



## Our Omnibus=Box.

It has been suggested, and in some quarters insisted on, that "Clito" is merely a new version of "Les Filles de Marbre," of Theodore Barriere and Lambert Thiboust, known better in England as "The Marble Heart." This conclusion has been arrived at probably from two reasons. The first act of "Les Filles de Marbre" is a Greek scene. The hero is Phidias the sculptor, the heroine is the famous Aspasia. The first act or prologue is a foreshadowing of the tale subsequently told, how a modern Parisian sculptor is demoralised and befooled by a notorious French courtesan, called Marco. The plays of "Clito" and "The Marble Heart" do resemble one another in this one particular, that a man of energy and talent, an artist by profession, with a quick brain and high intelligence, is dragged into the mire and gutter by an abandoned wretch, who has lost all sense of decency, and every trace of the purity of womanhood that

once was her inheritance. Helle and Marco are both shameless and heartless; but of the two, I prefer Marco, as I infinitely prefer the dramatic idea of "The Marble Heart" to that contained in "Clito," notwithstanding all its cleverness and bold language, its literary power and wonderful adornment.

In "The Marble Heart" the young sculptor, Raphael, leaves his aged mother, and the girl, Marie, to whom he is betrothed, at the bidding of the notorious Marco, who is a public character in Paris. She fools him to the top of his bent, and then flings him off for some richer and less scrupulous sensualist. Raphael, like Clito, hesitates, moralises, and endeavours to tear the demon arms from his neck, to wipe away her hot and repulsive embraces, but, unlike Clito, he succeeds in conquering his weakness. Unlike Clito, with a strong effort he tears himself away from the Circœan orgies at which he has assisted, and returns home to the girl whose heart he has broken, to the mother whose old eyes he has filled with bitter tears. There is a moral in "The Marble Heart." We do not wade knee-deep through a stream of horrors only to meet ghastly death in its most repulsive form. The art of the dramatist softens and chastens the subject exactly at the right moment. The audience is moved to pity, not excited to shuddering. Raphael, who has come home repentant, but in broken health, does not die slobbering over the cruel creature who has reduced him from a man to a beast; he does not crawl in his death agony to clasp the accursed hand of a woman who never shows for him one moment of love, or offers him one cry of pity; but he dies a broken-down prodigal, acknowledging his error, claiming pardon, humble and repentant in the presence of the mother who adores him, and the girl who in spite of his folly, has been faithful to him to the end.

The last scene of "The Marble Heart" in the original is infinitely touching. Raphael dies whilst his old mother is sleeping, comforted by the faithful Marie. His death-song is an old melody that Marie loved:

Le Ciel est tout plein d'espérance,  
La terre est pleine de chansons.

How different from the old dissolute days when the sculptor Raphael had listened in admiration to the song of Marco as she jingled her purse and rattled the gold, swearing that money was better than song of nightingale, or murmur of brook, better than any romantic Romeo or sentimental in the world.

Marco qu'aimes tu donc ?  
Ni la chante de la fauvette ?  
Ni le murmure de l'eau ?  
Ni le chante de l'alouette ?  
Ni la voix de Roméo.

. [The money chinks].  
Non ! voilà ce qu'aime Marco.

This song, this song of excitement and devilry, was once the rage of all Paris. It was sung in every night-house and casino. Many a Marco murmured it as she wheedled the Napoleons out of the pocket of some

tipsy lover. It was all so true. But it was not the song that the French dramatist dinned into the ears of his hero when he died, it was not the song with which he tortured and distressed his audience as they left the theatre. This would have been realism. But he had a higher art. "The earth is full of song, but heaven is full of hope." This was the melody that soothed the sculptor Raphael in his death-sleep. It is vanity and vexation down here below; it is peace and rest above. That was the artistic idea of the author of "The Marble Heart," and I contend it brings with it a better lesson, and a more elevating moral, a lesson more full of hope and loveliness than that of a murdered man dragging himself along the stage to kiss the hands of a polluted demon, who had no instant of remorse for what she had done, no hope of heaven, no desire to do aught else but revel in corruption.

The end of "The Marble Heart" is mere prettiness, but in that prettiness there is a touch of drama. It is sentiment as opposed to the grossness of realism. Scarcely has Raphael, the consumptive sculptor, breathed his last, his mother asleep, and the faithful Marie on her knees before him, when suddenly, in the awful silence, a knock is heard at the door, and Desgenais, the best friend of the dead man, opens it. A servant appears. Here is the dialogue:—

SERVANT. Is M. Raphael Didier at home?

DESGENAIS (*hiding the dead body of his friend*). What do you want with him?

SERVANT. Madame is here.

DESGENAIS (*sternly*). Let her come in.

MARCO enters.

DESGENAIS. Marco! you asked for Raphael. (*Uncovering dead body.*) Here he is!

MARCO (*with a cry of agony*). Raphael!

DESGENAIS (*whispering to MARCO*). Take care, Madame!

You will wake his mother!

(*The curtain falls.*)

Is not this picture of the abandoned woman gazing on the ruin she has caused infinitely more pathetic than the scene of a pile of mangled corpses with no sense of hope, no sigh for heaven? It is surely better art to send Raphael to his death softened and repentant, to wring one cry of love and pity from the cold and calculating Marco, than to send both Helle and Clito to eternity, the one cursing her fate on earth, the other using his last breath to slobber kisses on the accursed hand that murdered him, for, in reality, Helle is Clito's murderer.

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But then they tell me Clito is so human. It may be very terrible, but so many men do exactly as Clito did. No doubt. But all that is most human in nature is not, on that account, admissible in art. Women bite the noses off the faces of those who arouse their jealousy; men knock the eyes out of their wives and mistresses; monsters exist in every grade of society. But art is not for the resurrection of monsters; it was invented to exorcise them. Zola tells us that Nana rejected the lucrative offers of Parisian bankers, and preferred the society of a low, drunken actor, who blacked her eyes during the night, and swore at her because

there were crumbs in the bed. All this may be very true, but it is none the less hideous and revolting. Human nature is bad and brutal enough outside the walls of a theatre, without dishing it up on the stage for our edification. I want to believe that men and women are in reality better than they appear to be, and not more monstrous. I want the stage to teach each successive audience to be purified by hope and by the contemplation of lovely natures, not sickened and saddened by opening cesspools under their noses. I will give an illustration. The other day an enterprising tradesman at the Albert Palace wanted to tempt me to buy a shilling microscope. He put into it an infinitesimal speck of the dust of old cheese, a tiny drop of sour paste, a minute particle of water, and showed me animals more hideous than bugs or fleas, wriggling, crawling, abominable animalculæ, worms and maggots all squabbling over one another for dear life. Why on earth should I expend a shilling on this ghastly "memento mori"? Why should I carry about a microscope full of worms and maggots, because they are in the water we drink, in the air we breathe? They will come soon enough! Or why should I go to the theatre in order to be further convinced of the bitter truth that some men are fools and some women are monsters, when I know it full well by fatal experience? No; the highest art is that capable of idealising, not of realising. If I want a picture of revolting depravity, I can get it photographed from real life, and stuck up as a "memento mori." But the poet and the artist can alone take me to better, purer, and nobler worlds than this. They teach us hope, not despair!

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"The Cenci" experiment has turned out as every expert knew it would. It did not require an elaborate performance of Shelley's tragedy in public and an immense amount of study to ascertain the obvious fact that "The Cenci" in its original form is a cumbersome and unactable play. Had the Shelley Society needed any advice on the matter they could have got it in two minutes from either Mr. Hermann Vezin or Miss Alma Murray, who did yeomen's service to the Shelley worshippers. If the play was ever to be performed the dialogue should have been carefully weeded, and the play judiciously cut for performance. There is a vast difference between what Colley Cibber and David Garrick did for Shakespeare, and that what Mr. Henry Irving is accustomed to do. To have altered one line or sentence of Shelley would have been intolerable, to have changed one sentence or added one word would have been an unpardonable offence; but there is a wide margin between that and cutting the tragedy, or judiciously re-arranging it for public performance. It does not follow that because Shelley was a great poet he was on that account an experienced stage manager. The greatest dramatic poets are those who know the least of the stage. Browning's "Blot on the Scutcheon" ran for three nights under Macready's management. What would be the fate of the best of Tennyson's and Swinburne's tragedies if they were placed on the stage as they were written? They would have failed as certainly as "The Cenci" unmistakably failed—a failure that might have been anticipated

by the exercise of a few grains of that invaluable article "common sense." Up to a certain point the play of "The Cenci" is a fairly good acting play if the poetry were pruned to suit the exigencies of the theatre. Where it wants cutting is after the death of Count Cenci. The trial scene, where Beatrice perjures herself to save her life, might well be omitted, allowing the lovely last act to follow close upon the death of the Count. Notwithstanding the violent language of certain enthusiastic members of the Shelley Society when anyone dares to differ with them, it is at least open to question whether invitations should be indiscriminately offered to young girls and innocent women who may have read Shelley, but are not necessarily familiar with the plot of "The Cenci." A man is not necessarily "a cad" because he considers that the plot of "The Cenci" were far better left undiscussed in general society. Be that as it may, there can be no possible excuse for reprinting in a book widely circulated in a theatre a loathsome appendix merely because it had previously found its way into one of the editions of the poet's works. To put such a pamphlet into the hands of women is to incur a very grave and serious responsibility. To say that women in the theatre did not read it is simply untrue. The green pamphlets were circulated indiscriminately, and there was no attempt made to keep them out of women's hands. To play "The Cenci" was one thing; to describe with revolting detail unmentionable crimes was quite another. But from the performance one good thing resulted. Mr. Hermann Vezin and Miss Alma Murray acted as they have never acted before. The curse of the Count is a thing to be remembered, and so is the agonised despair of Beatrice. Both artists have considerably increased their reputation by this really remarkable work, and I am glad to know that the Shelley Society intends to offer them both a pretty present, in recognition of their fine acting at the Grand Theatre, Islington.

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"An Actor's Holiday" will be the title of an article in the summer number of "The Art Journal," by Joseph Hatton, whose "Clubland" and "Faust" papers in that well-known periodical have increased its popularity both in England and America. The actor whose holiday Mr. Hatton will describe is Mr. Henry Irving; the scenes of his travels is in Belgium and Holland; and the time, on the eve of the the first American tour. The article will be more or less biographical, and it will give the reader some interesting notes about "Faust," concerning the production of which Mr. Irving was busy, with many thoughts and fancies, one quiet day at Bruges, three years ago. Mr. Hatton's love of the stage ensures us a sympathetic and interesting sketch. I notice, by the way, that the heroine of his new novel, now running in "Cassell's Saturday Journal," is an actress who (and this is a novelty in fiction) is not "the rage of the town."

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"How can I thank you?"

HUMAN NATURE.

*Augustin Harris*

Miss Helen Forsyth, whose pretty photograph as Molly Seagrim in "Sophia" appears in this number of THE THEATRE, has before now been praised for her pleasant and promising acting. We first heard of this young actress so recently as 1883, when she made a hit in "My Awful Dad," a success which was followed up, at the Strand and Opera Comique theatres, as Violet Melrose in "Our Boys," Kate in "The Guv'nor," and Ophelia in "The Excursion Train." In the production of "Dark Days," at the Haymarket last year, she played Ethel with success, and in the recent performance, at the same house, of "A Woman of the World" she acted the juvenile heroine with much grace, refinement, and intelligence. Her acting as Molly Seagrim in Mr. Buchanan's adaptation of "Tom Jones" shows her to be possessed of a very clever idea of character.

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It is seldom that we are able to chronicle so brilliantly successful a career, for so young a man, as that of Mr. Augustus Harris, the popular lessee and manager of Drury Lane, whose photograph also appears in this number. Mr. Harris was born in Paris, in the Rue Taitbout, in a house now pulled down, on March 18, 1852, so that he is only just thirty-four years of age. His father, who was for over thirty years at Covent Garden, held the important post of régisseur-general at the Italian opera at Paris, and was therefore in a position to give his son a good start in life, had he cared for a stage career. But the stage-fever had not yet come upon the subject of this sketch, who was sent to a "finishing" college in England, where he was instructed over again in all that he had learnt abroad, and where he acted as an amateur. He went into the city, to the house of Emile Erlanger and Co., where his knowledge of French and of German—the latter acquired during a year's residence in Hanover—made him valuable as their foreign correspondent. On his father's death, he entered the dramatic profession, in consequence of the advice given him by the late John Ryder, who, being in Paris in 1873, was consulted by Mr. Augustus Harris. He recommended his young friend to study the first act of "Hamlet," and to recite it to him. No sooner said than done. The first act of the tragedy was committed to memory, and, in a dimly-lighted cellar in Paris, the future manager of Drury Lane recited the Shakespearean lines to John Ryder. "Go back to London," was the advice tendered by the veteran actor; and to London Mr. Harris returned, resolved to win his way on the stage. He made his first appearance at the Theatre Royal, Manchester, in September, 1873, playing Malcolm in a revival of "Macbeth." Thence he went to the Amphitheatre, now the Court, Liverpool, acting juveniles and light comedy in support of Mr. Barry Sullivan. From that time his rise in his adopted calling was comparatively rapid. From acting Henry Greenlanes in "Pink Dominoes," at the Criterion in 1877, he became, in 1879, lessee and manager of Drury Lane, reviving there, on November 1 of that year, Shakespeare's "Henry V." The enormous

quantity of work and the varied nature of it since accomplished by the young manager may be gathered from the fact that in seven years Mr. Harris has presented seven Shakespearean plays on the stage of "old Drury," including "As You Like It," "Othello," "Julius Cæsar," "Twelfth Night," "The Winter's Tale," and "Macbeth." He has brought out seven important new plays by English authors, in six of which he has collaborated, and in several of which he has acted the leading parts; and he has also produced the seven best pantomimes that have been seen in as many years on the London stage. In 1881, the late John McCullough acted, under his management, in "Virginius" and "Othello," and, a year later, Madame Ristori played in "Macbeth" and "Elizabeth" at Drury Lane. In 1881 the memorable engagement of the Saxe-Meiningen company was also played at Drury Lane, and the engagement at Easter of the Carl Rosa company has come to be looked upon as a fixture in Drury Lane annals. Youth, energy, and enterprise have combined in making Mr. Augustus Harris the most successful manager of the "National Theatre" which this century has produced. This brief account of his work is a remarkable and honourable record.

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Seldom has St. George's Hall been more crowded than on the evening of April 27, it being the occasion of an invitation soirée given by The Busy Bees. An additional interest was given the performance by the fact that Mr. Lionel Brough had consented to take part with the amateurs, and appear in his original character of Joseph Ironside, in "Nine Points of the Law"; and never has the talented actor played better. Some of the amateurs would do well to bear in mind the simple manner and freedom from exaggeration shown by Mr. Brough. As Mrs. Smylie, Mrs. Lennox Browne was seen to great advantage; she brought out the different sides of the character into relief, ably showing the distinction between her affected feeling in her first scene with Ironside, and her sincerity in the last scene of the play. Mrs. Smylie is certainly one of the best things Mrs. Lennox Browne has ever done, and her success was thoroughly deserved. Mr. William Harding is also to be congratulated on her village schoolgirl: schoolgirls of every description are always excellent in William Harding's hands. Miss Maud Curwen and Mr. J. Rudge Harding were satisfactory as the young lovers; but Mr. P. K. Houghton was not good as the Attorney. The part of Rollingstone was undertaken by Mr. L. Mowbray Marras, who raced through it with much "go," but also with some exaggeration; and if freedom of gesture deserves commendation, to use one's arms like a wind-mill in a gale is somewhat carrying things to an extreme. Miss Margaret Brandon next recited "The Spanish Mother" with much power and intensity, but her delivery was rather too violent; however, as an apology was made for the young lady, who was suffering from severe neuralgia, it was no doubt owing to this. "Creatures

of Impulse" concluded the programme. Pipette found a very charming representative in Mrs. Bourne. This lady, who is a novice on the amateur stage, was very nervous at first; but this soon wore off, and her half shy, half coquettish ways suited the part admirably. She has, moreover, a pleasant voice, and sings with taste; though it sounded rather oddly to hear a song from "Herminie"—words as well as music—in Gilbert's Fairy Tale. Mrs. William Harding, as Susette, surprised her audience by her capital dancing of a *pas seul* and a dance with Mr. Morton H. Cotton, who appeared as Boomblehardt, whose dancing was very good indeed; both were encored. Miss Kate Behnke was appropriately quaint as the strange Old Lady. Mr. Herman Klein made a very good Peter, not being in the least amateurish. Mr. S. H. Stafford was also well suited as the Sergeant. The Villagers were represented by the other members of the Club and the piano was held by Misses Margaret Brandon and Metcalf and Messrs. Thomas Cooke and Handel Gear. The evening was a success.



New plays produced, and important revivals, in London, the provinces, and Paris, from April 19 to May 15, 1886:—

(Revivals are marked thus \*.)

#### LONDON:

- April 24\* "Human Nature," drama, in five acts, by Henry Pettitt and Augustus Harris. Drury Lane Theatre. (Originally produced, September 12, 1885.)
- ,, 24 "The Pickpocket," farcical comedy, in three acts, adapted by George P. Hawtrey from the German of Von Moser. Globe Theatre.
- ,, 24 "Lurline," burlesque, in three acts and six scenes, by Robert Reece and H. B. Farnie. Avenue Theatre.
- ,, 26 "Hard Hearts," original drama, in five acts, by A. J. Charleson and Charles Wilmot. Grand Theatre.
- May 1 "Clito," original tragedy, in five acts, by Sydney Grundy and Wilson Barrett. Princess's Theatre.
- ,, 7 "The Cenci," tragedy, in five acts, by Percy Bysshe Shelley. Grand Theatre. ("Private" performance).
- ,, 10 "The Lily of Léoville," comic opera, in three acts, the book by Felix Rémo and Alfred Murray, the lyrics by Clement Scott, and the music by Ivan Caryll. Comedy Theatre. (Previously produced, on May 3, at the Grand Theatre, Birmingham.)
- ,, 10 "The Commodore," opera-bouffe, in three acts, by H. B. Farnie and Robert Reece, music by Offenbach. Avenue Theatre. (Afternoon performance.)
- , 18 "Jewels and Dust; or, the Romance of a Court," new and original domestic comedy, in four acts, by George Manville Fenn. Crystal Palace.

## PROVINCES:

- April 19 "Love or Hate," drama, in three acts, by J. Wild and F. Williams. Prince of Wales's Theatre, Salford.
- „ 24 "God Save the Queen," new and original drama, in five acts, by R. Palgrave and F. Grover. Prince's Theatre, Bristol.
- „ 30 "Our Lass," drama, by Wilfred Stephens. Prince of Wales's Theatre, Salford.
- May 3 "The Lily of Léoville." (Produced in London on May 10, which date see).
- „ 3 "Built on Sand," drama, in five acts, by Frank Harvey Alexandra Opera House Sheffield.
- „ 5 "Lovers," musical play. Theatre Royal and Opera House, Cork.
- „ 10 "April Rain," comedy, in a prologue and two acts, by Leonard S. Outram. Theatre Royal, Reading.
- „ 11 "Love or Honour," comedy-drama, in two acts, by Henry Arncliffe. Corn Exchange, Stamford.

## PARIS:

- May 1 "Il était une fois . . . ." operette, in three acts, words by MM. Jaime and Dozé-Semiane; music by O. de Lagoanère. Menus-Plaisirs.
- „ 3\* "Le Grand Mogul," opera-bouffe, in four acts, by MM. Chivot and Duru; music by Edmond Audran. Gaîté.
- „ 3\* "Excelsior," ballet. Eden.
- „ 4 "Les Mousquetaires au Couvent," comic opera, in three acts, words by MM. Paul Ferrier and Jules Prével; music by Louis Varney. Folies-Dramatiques.
- „ 5 "L'Héritage de Perdrivol," comedy, in three acts, by MM. William Busnach and Duru. Déjazet.
- „ 6 "Maître Ambros," a lyric drama, in four acts and five tableaux, by MM. François Coppée and Dorchain; music by Charles Widor. Opéra-Comique.
- „ 7\* "Le Misanthrope," comedy, by Molière. Comédie Française.
- „ 7\* "La Coupe Enchantée," comedy, in one act, in prose, by MM. J. de la Fontaine and Champmeslé. Comédie Française.
- „ 8\* "Chemins de Fer," comedy-vaudeville, in five acts, by MM. Labiche, Delacour and Adolphe Choler. Cluny.
- „ 8 "La Légende de Sainte-Elizabeth," oratorio, by Otto Roquette, translated by Gustave Lagye; music by Franz Liszt. Trocadero.
- „ 11 "La Veuve de Damoclès," comedy, in three acts, by MM. Victor Bernard and Paul Bilhaut. Vaudeville.
- „ 11 "Allô! Allô!" comedy, in one act, M. Picrc Valdagne. Vaudeville.
- „ 15\* "Le Médicin malgré lui," comic opera, in three acts, taken from Molière's comedy; music by Charles Gounod. Opéra Comique.
- „ 15\* "Le Naufrage de la Méduse," drama, in five acts and nine tableaux, by MM. Charles Desnoyer and Adolphe d'Ennery Ambigu.
- „ 16\* "La Vie dc Bohème," comedy, in four acts, by Henri Murger. Odéon.
- „ 17\* "Henry VIII.," opera, in four acts and five tableaux, libretto by MM. Detroyat and A. Silvestre; music by Saint-Saëns. Grand Opéra.



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